







**RANDOM  
RECOLLECTIONS**





---

---

# RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

BY  
BEVERLEY B. MUNFORD

FORSTAN ET HAEC OLIM  
MEMINISSE JUVABIT

PRIVATELY PRINTED  
1905

---

---



in exchange  
Harvard Univ. Lib.  
MAY 15 1941

TO  
MARY R. SANFORD

AT WHOSE HOSPITABLE HOME IN OLD BENNINGTON, VERMONT,  
MANY OF THESE PAGES WERE WRITTEN, THIS LITTLE  
VOLUME IS DEDICATED AS A MARK OF MY  
FRIENDSHIP AND ESTEEM



*At the suggestion of my wife, I have noted down the following reminiscences, thinking with her that they might prove of interest to our children. I have not attempted to portray the more important events of my life, nor to frankly recount its sacred joys and sorrows.*

*These mental excursions have awakened many pleasant memories, and if the incidents and stories I have recorded shall serve to brighten the present of my children and friends, my object will have been accomplished.*

*Richmond, Va., 1905.*



.

## *Random Recollections*







# *Random Recollections*



## CHAPTER I

### *My Earliest Days*



WAS born on the 10th day of September, 1856, in the old red brick house which formerly stood on the northeast corner of Fifth and Canal Streets, in the City of Richmond. The house was built or bought by my paternal grandfather, William Munford, near the close of the eighteenth century, on his removal to Richmond from his country place "Richlands," in the County of Mecklen-

burg. The location is not at this time fashionable, nor especially desirable as a place of residence, but at that time Fifth Street was one of the grand avenues of the then somewhat new town, while the high hill on which the house stood, overlooking the James River, with its falls and picturesque islands, made the place an ideal one for a comfortable home. The old house is now gone and the hill itself has been levelled down to conform to the new grade of the near-by streets. In after years, whilst still a small boy, I visited my grandmother there, and from that sojourn I retain many memories of the place. I recall the long flights of steps leading from the street to the yard and thence into the porch, and the trial which it was to my short legs to make the ascent. I recall the great cherry-tree which stood in the midst of the garden—verily, a delightful sight to my eyes and heart—only darkened by a forbidding row of beehives which my grandmother with provident care had arranged around it. I remember the cigar-tree, as the children called it, because its pods resembled real cigars, and the great pleasure afforded us as with mock seriousness we puffed the pretended weeds. I remember, too, the little basement-room where, under the gentle guidance of my

---

aunt, I learned my first lesson, and was initiated into the mysteries of book, atlas and slate.

In December, 1856, my father removed to Williamsburg. It was the winter of the "great snow," and I always associated in my boyish mind the trip and the storm, though I, of course, had no remembrance of either. In the same way I also linked the day of my birth, the 10th of September, with the battle of Lake Erie, though the former occurred nearly a half century later than Commodore Perry's famous victory.

The new home to which my people went was in many respects most attractive. Williamsburg had the charm which comes with long years of peace, culture and a reasonable amount of this world's goods. For nearly a century it was the seat of the colonial government, with its viceregal palace and court. Here, and in the adjacent country of which it was the centre, settled the Cavaliers who, faithful to Church and King, fled from Cromwell and his parliaments. Its culture and characteristics were English. In the idiom of their speech, in the books which they read, in the customs which they followed, these newcomers on the James but kept alive the ways and manners of the Fatherland. Here was William and Mary College, the child

of England's King and Queen, which reflected the light caught by its masters and teachers from Oxford and Cambridge. In the old cruciform church of Bruton parish the liturgy of the home establishment might be heard on Sundays and on all feast days. In the House of Burgesses, at the eastern end of Duke of Gloucester Street, sat the colonial assembly, which faintly reproduced the notable gatherings which met in the great hall beneath the towers of Westminster. In the vice-regal palace banquets and festivities were held, which in some small degree recalled the glories of Whitehall and St. James.

The Revolution wrought many changes in the old colonial town. The governor and his court were gone. The great square pew, decorated with the royal arms, was no longer seen in the parish church. The palace was in ruins and the seat of government had been moved to Richmond. Still, despite these and other changes, the place and people remained very much as of old.

The historic interest, which had always invested the city, had been enhanced by the happenings of the revolutionary period. Here Patrick Henry, by his resolutions and speech on the Stamp Act, had uttered a

---

bold defiance against British tyranny. In the Apollo Hall of the Raleigh Tavern, where Jefferson tells us he had, while a student, so often danced with his sweet "Belinda," the leaders of the Revolution, Richard Henry Lee, Thomas Jefferson, and others of kindred spirit, had met nightly for conference. In the House of Burgesses had been enacted the series of measures which fairly launched the Revolution: first, the call for the Continental Congress; then the Virginia Declaration of Independence; then her appeal to Congress to adopt a resolution of similar import for all the colonies, which finally brought forth the great Declaration of July 4th, 1776. As it witnessed the opening scenes of the Revolution, so, too, here and at Yorktown, a few miles distant, were fought the battles which brought final victory to the American arms.

It was a place for a peaceful if not a strenuous life. No factory, furnace, nor business enterprise of any description, except a few stores, was to be found within its limits. Portions of its broad streets and all of its Plazas—the latter most appropriately called "Greens"—were generally overgrown with grass. Its population of some fifteen hundred souls was well provided with this world's goods. The plantations of the well-

to-do, situated on the James and York rivers, yielded, besides great crops, the wild-fowl, oysters, fish and venison, for which the section is so noted. In the mysteries of cooking and serving these viands, the Tide-water Virginians displayed, with pride, the greatest skill and interest. Their cellars were well stocked with Madeira, and the proper decoction of a mint-julep or a sherry-cobbler was the accomplishment of every gentleman.

Christmas was a season of great rejoicing, at which time homecomings and social gatherings everywhere abounded, amid a bewildering profusion of egg-nog, mince-pies and plum-puddings. At all times their homes were the abode of a most generous hospitality. The graces of conversation were cultivated and appreciated—the personnel of dinner-parties and other social gatherings stimulating and exemplifying these gifts. And so these people pursued the even tenor of their ways, paying little heed to the great world which lay beyond the circle of their environment. They met the duties and problems of life in an easy-going fashion, just as their fathers had done for years before; and, like their fathers, they brightened their days

---

with the joys of hospitality and good cheer and exhilarating sports by flood and field.

Since the times of which I write, even greater changes have been wrought in the homes and lives of these people. The Civil War worked a political, social and industrial revolution, but still one may trace in the Williamsburg of to-day some fragrant reminders of the picturesque days of the long ago.

My father had purchased Tazewell Hall—an ancient house, as we count in America. It was formerly the home of Edmund Randolph, distinguished in the annals of the Union as the author of the most noted plan for the Federal Constitution, and as the Attorney-General of the United States in Washington's first cabinet. It was an interesting house, spacious and well constructed. I recall the great hall, from which the place doubtless took its name, the wainscoting of the lower rooms reaching to the ceilings, the heavy walnut doors, with great brass locks upon them, the glass chandeliers and the marble mantelpieces—the latter displaying figures strangely resembling different animals, deciphering which, with my father's assistance, was one of the delights of my boyhood days.

Mr. Watson, in his recent book, "The Life and Times of Thomas Jefferson," makes the following allusions to the old house:

"Tazewell Hall, sitting on its green terrace at Williamsburg, was a fair specimen of the old-fashioned home in Virginia,—the house of scholarly, hospitable John Randolph, Royal Attorney-General of the Colony during the time of Lord Dunmore.

"This was one of the centers of fashionable life. Crown officers were at ease here; and whatever lord or lady from Mother Country happened to visit Williamsburg was sure to be entertained at Tazewell Hall.

"Here also were seen in familiar social intercourse with the Randolphs and with each other, such men as Washington, Page, Lee, Nelson, Wythe, Pendleton, Harrison, Tucker, and Jefferson. Many a time the large barn-like, but most comfortable old mansion, was filled with music as the King's attorney bent lovingly over the celebrated Cremona violin and played a duet with the freckled-faced lord of Monticello. Many a time Lord Dunmore, guiltless as yet of burning Virginia's towns, and attempts at negro insurrections, chatted contentedly here with councillors, lawyers, farmers and Murray relatives from Scotland. Through these large



---

rooms sounded footsteps which yet echo in the corridors of time ; within them were heard voices which history shall ever hear."

Back from the house, which was situated in the suburbs of the city, stretched the gardens, orchards, meadows, streams, fields and forests of the place, constituting, as I afterwards found, a charmed region of unfailing joy and interest to my boyish heart. Here we brought our Household Gods, and here, with no cloud upon the sky, we settled down to the peaceful joys of a new home in an old land.

I cannot recall any incidents of interest which marked the first four years of my life. My mother's gentle care, my father and his riding horse, a Christmas tree, my toys,—these are some pictures of those days. From the confusion of memories there appears first in distinct form the scenes and happenings at the beginning of the Civil War. I remember the marching of soldiers and the beating of drums, and most of all, my father's good-by, when he set out for the army. My mother was left with my younger brother, a baby in arms, and myself, then five years of age. Of course, there were one or more of the ever-devoted servants,

whose faithfulness to their people furnish one of the brightest touches to the dark picture of those trying times. Events, the importance and sequence of which made no impression upon my mind, followed in quick succession. The battle of Williamsburg brought terror to my mother and her little household, with the roar of cannon, the marching of armies, and the confusion and destruction which followed in their wake. Then I recall McClellan's army, which for days streamed through the main street of Williamsburg, marching on to the great battles to be fought before the gates of Richmond.

Despite the defeat of McClellan, Williamsburg remained from this time on within the Federal lines, and so—doubtless because of her unprotected situation and her desire to be where she might sometimes see or hear from my father—my mother obtained the necessary passport and set out for Richmond. Tazewell Hall was left with such of the servants as decided to remain. It must have been a trying moment to my mother as she turned her back upon her home. The college buildings had been burned, many of the residences of her neighbors had been taken possession of by soldiers or by negroes, the churches were all hospitals crowded

---

with wounded soldiers, and a large body of troops occupied the orchard in the rear of Tazewell Hall. Though they burned the fences and outhouses, yet it is good to know that the home was left unharmed.

At Richmond we spent some time at my grandmother's, in the high red brick house where I was born.

From Richmond my mother and her little ones went on to the home of her brother, Mr. Peter Copland, in the County of Botetourt. Of this trip I have few recollections. I recall an experience upon the canal boat, by which means most of the journey was made. At one of the locks I embraced the opportunity to step ashore. A few minutes later the boat left me and was proceeding up stream with all the wild celerity characteristic of that means of locomotion. My wails, the efforts of men ashore and people aboard to get me back upon the boat, have left their impress upon my mind.

My uncle's home was at the extreme upper end of the valley of Virginia, a region justly celebrated not only for its fertility and beauty of scenery, but for the character of its people, and the many interesting historical events with which the section is associated. It was upon this fair valley that Governor Spotswood

and his gallant comrades, known in history as the "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe," looked, as they stood for the first time on the top of the Blue Ridge after their long and hazardous ride from the Lowlands of Tide-water Virginia. Here the sturdy Scotch-Irish, Virginia Puritans, settled, and joined in the great work of driving out the Indians, clearing the forests, and founding a commonwealth far away from the annoying association of Prelacy and Cavaliers. From its people in later years was to go out that great military genius, Stonewall Jackson, who, with true Cromwellian characteristics, prayed as he fought, and announced his victories in the now well-known words, "God has blessed our arms with victory to-day."

The lower end of the valley along the banks of the Shenandoah, whose Indian name, signifying "The Daughter of the Stars," well typifies its beauty, was the scene of Jackson's marvelous campaigns and of Sheridan's famous ride, which latter has been so oft celebrated by brush and pen.

My uncle's home proved a very attractive place for a six-year-old boy. My recollection is still fragmentary, but I recall many of the simple joys which form part of a boy's life upon a Virginia farm. I dis-

tinctly remember the little negro boys who were my boon companions. On Sundays, my uncle being a strict Presbyterian, I was denied the pleasure of their society, being only permitted to watch them through the paling fence which surrounded the home, while they roamed with joy and freedom over the whole farm. Despite my youth this visit left an indelible impress upon my mind, because it was there that my mother died.

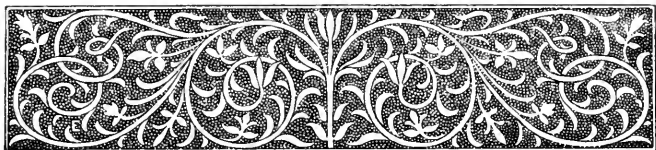
My impressions of my mother consist of faint memories, blended with traditions, and the accounts of those who knew her. The composite picture is that of a woman of gentle, yet dignified presence; a face of rare sweetness and refinement,—gray eyes and chestnut hair. Sympathetic and capable, with a large endowment of common sense; deeply religious, living in conscious nearness to the unseen. From the far-away past comes the subtile sense of her tender care, and the sweet picture of this sainted woman, strong in faith and love, offering up prayers for her boys.

From Boutetourt my little brother and I were carried in the fall of 1863—I cannot recall how or by whom—to Richmond. Here my father, no longer in the army but holding some official place with the Confederate

Government, sought to establish a home and gather around him all his children.

My experiences and trials in the capital of the Confederacy during the last eighteen months of the war will form the recitals of the next chapter.





## CHAPTER II

### *War Times in Richmond*



THE most distinct impression left upon my mind of this period—the last eighteen months of the war—is that of cold and hunger. There were certainly many days of light and sunshine, and doubtless many times when I had enough and to spare, but these occasions have nearly all been effaced by the other and more distinct memory. As is well known, all the ports of the Confederacy were blockaded at the very commencement of the war, and so continued until its close. No supplies, therefore, could be brought in from without, while the markets abroad for the crops of cotton and tobacco, which constituted the South's great source of wealth, were also closed. The large majority of the men were with the armies, and

thus few were left to till the fields. These causes, together with the incessant fighting during the previous two years and the enormous consumption and destruction of all food products, left the South—and especially Virginia and Richmond—in the fall of 1863, almost destitute. Some relief was found in the many makeshifts and substitutes adopted by the people. Thus coffee was made from rye, corn, or potatoes; sorghum took the place of sugar, and gravies figured as a substitute for butter. Even the staples of life—bread and meat—were very scarce, or so advanced in price that they were most difficult to obtain. Nearly every patriotic citizen—my father included—had sold everything saleable and loaned the proceeds to the Confederate Government, receiving the bonds of the latter, payable ten years after the acknowledgment of its independence by the United States. And so to the scarcity of provisions was added that of money. I cannot now recall exactly what we lived on, or, rather, what was meted out to me—a small boy. Corn bread furnished, as it did to our forefathers, the principal stay of life. Equally dear and difficult to obtain were coal and wood; so in our home one fire was the rallying point around which the whole family assembled. I remember a



---

friendly blacksmith shop which I frequented, where, seated on a box near the forge, I enjoyed the warmth of the fire, watched the sparks from the anvil, and listened to the news as detailed by the smith and his gossiping friends. Almost every delicacy obtainable was eagerly sought for the sick and wounded soldiers that filled the great hospitals in and near the city. I remember walking with one of my sisters all the way to Chimborazo Hospital to carry a roasted apple to a sick soldier. This hospital consisted of groups of frame-buildings, sheds, and tents, in which were crowded thousands of sick and wounded soldiers. Oakwood Cemetery near by, with its serried ranks of over fourteen thousand graves, is a solemn and sad reminder of the times and its terrors.

But despite the want and suffering, the cheer and spirit of the people were well exemplified in the not infrequent social gatherings. The chance possession of a few "good things," as they were called, meant a party of some sort, large or small. I remember one entertainment at our home to which a great many people were invited, including many prominent soldiers, which had its inception in the sudden acquisition of a gallon of molasses. Molasses-cake and buttermilk, or

lemonade, furnished the refreshments, and men and women laughed and danced as if death and famine were unknown. I remember an occasion when all the ingredients of a cake were in hand, except butter, and so following the unfortunate suggestion of some one who recommended mutton suet instead, a cake was made. That mutton suet gave the cake a flavor which rendered it impossible even to the voracious appetite of a hungry boy of eight years of age. The loss of the sugar, eggs, flour, etc., which went into that cake, was to me a source of great and lasting sorrow.

Another characteristic of the times which I recall was the clothing worn by the people. Nearly all the women were in mourning, as death had entered almost every home. Old clothes long out of fashion, ancient coats, dresses made out of curtains, and such like materials, were brought into requisition. I cannot recall any particular article of my make-up, except a pair of shoes made at the penitentiary and a cavalry soldier's cap—the latter many sizes too large. Whether my cap fell from the head of some unfortunate soldier killed in battle, or was presented me by some returning brave, or had been worn by my father when he filled the role of Major, I never knew. I only know I presented

—a small boy of eight—a most grotesque figure, arrayed in this great cap, which turned over when I walked, but stood up like a beaver when I ran. I learned afterwards that my appearance was a source of great mortification to my sisters, when on Sundays, walking home from St. Paul's church with their soldier beaux, I would appear upon the scene and run up and down along the sidewalk arrayed in my wonderful cap, penitentiary shoes and much-worn clothes.

Despite all these conditions there were incidents which afforded me great pleasure, and which present a brighter picture of the period. Thus I was fortunate enough upon one occasion to find five dollars of Confederate money in a rubbish pile. After much consideration, but without conference with any one, I invested the whole sum in a cake. At another time, with a dollar presented by a gentleman for carrying his goat home, I made a large purchase of chestnuts. A beau of one of my sisters, doubtless seeking her favor by winning my heart, offered to carry me to the theatre to see the play of "East Lynne." The house was so crowded that we could not get in, but I felt more than compensated by being taken to a near-by confectionery, where, amid the splendors of light and warmth, I was

given cake and ice-cream. The wedding, too, of my cousin, Miss Rutherford, furnished another occasion when I had a glimpse of brighter scenes. This wedding, which seems to have been notable because of the "good things" which abounded, has been described by the facile pen of Mr. John S. Wise in his recent book, "The End of an Era." I accompanied my sister to the house, and was shown through the rooms, seeing the decorations and, above all, the supper-table. The moment was all too brief, and as the front door closed, shutting me out from light and music and supper, I lingered, like some ragged Peri, at the gates of that veritable paradise.

Among other happenings of the times I remember the military funerals. These occasions, especially when some general or popular hero was buried, were notable to me because of the brass bands, the marching legions, and the large concourse of people. I would follow as best I could the processions, seeming never to tire so long as I could hear the measured tramp of the soldiers and the strains of martial music.

I cannot now recall that I had at the time any impression that the existing order of things was unusual, or that my lot was peculiarly hard. Just such con-

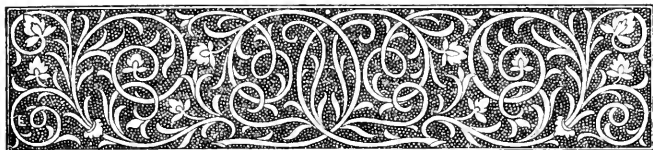
ditions had existed from the dawn of my memory, and my lot seemed to be only that of other little boys of my age and station.

I realized, however, on the fateful Sunday of April, 1865, that some extraordinary event was about to happen. What it meant or why it should occur, I could not, of course, understand. Its direful import, however, became more manifest when, on the following day, I witnessed the scenes incident to the evacuation of Richmond. The great fire enveloping the whole business portion of the city in its folds, the many explosions which resulted from the flames, the sight of squads of convicts from the penitentiary—some one having opened the doors of that institution—the incoming of thousands of blue-coated federal troops, the crowds of bewildered people hurrying through the streets,—all combined to form a picture which I shall never forget, and which gradually made known to me the momentous fact that the war was over.

The month of May found us en route to Williamsburg, making the journey by steamboat down the James River to Grove Wharf, some five miles from the latter city. We spent the night in the old Burwell homestead at the Grove, and went on next morning to

Williamsburg. Tazewell Hall, its yards, gardens, and apple-orchard all wreathed in green and blossoms, presented a welcome sight to the eyes of these weary home-comers. My boyish heart leaped at the possibilities for pleasure which I saw everywhere around me —anticipations which were destined to be most pleasantly realized.





### CHAPTER III

#### *School Days at Tazewell Hall*



CANNOT attempt any description of the changes in Williamsburg wrought by the war, the poverty of the people, nor the political and industrial confusion which existed. Of civil government there was none. The military authorities held sway, and, indeed, continued their rule until Virginia was formally readmitted into the Union in 1870. A strange commentary it seemed upon the theory so resolutely upheld by Mr. Lincoln that Virginia had no power to secede from the Union, and so to enforce its laws within her borders he had the right to marshal armies and send them against her people. But Mr. Lincoln was dead and "another king reigned in Egypt which knew not Joseph." The political and industrial

conditions, however, did not seriously disturb me—a boy of nine years. My mind and heart were occupied by the concerns and happenings of my little life, and of such I will proceed to give some account.

Soon after our return my education, which had suffered in consequence of the troublous times, was taken in hand, with the result that the task of teaching me was assumed by my father and three sisters. That I did not make much headway with such a superabundance of teachers is not surprising. I remember the rather unique way my father attempted to teach me to read, which, if not according to the methods of modern pedagogics, was at least very agreeable. After listening with rather ill-concerned impatience while I read with many halts and failures my appointed lesson, he would take the book himself, read off the lesson, and then to impress me with the necessity for facility and expression would read copious extracts from his favorite poets. This example of his method in teaching is in keeping with the tradition extant in the family—that during the war, having been sent to an auction to buy furniture of pressing need for the home, he returned without any furniture, but overjoyed at a bust of Pallas which he had purchased. I recall, too, that as a



---

part of my daily exercise I was required to learn the Church Catechism—a proceeding not at all to my liking. The great hall at home will always be associated in my mind with my efforts to master “The Desire,” and “My Duty to my Neighbor,” and of the way in which I would roll back and forth on the floor between the doors, oftentimes suffused in a flood of tears. Later I was sent to the Grammar School connected with William and Mary College, where my trials and triumphs were those of the ordinary boy. A feature of this school, which I have occasion to remember, was the custom of the president of the college to appear on alternate Fridays, when the scholars were expected to declaim or read original compositions. Though really one of the kindest of men, he was held in profound awe by the scholars—myself included. He was always accompanied by a fierce bull-terrier named John Brown, and the presence of those two was sufficient to drive almost every idea from a boy’s head. I recall a companion who had prepared a composition upon birds, but who, after many incoherent mutterings, was only able to aver that the “woodpecker has a red head and the eagle soars very high.” A comparative freedom from stage-fright in after years I

attributed in no small degree to my experience on those occasions.

Of course, I joined in all the games and sports common to boys of my age and station—fishing and bathing in summer, skating in winter, marbles, tops, bandy, baseball, football, cat, high anthony, foot-and-a-half, leap-frog, and hop-scotch. My joy in all these sports, however, was somewhat marred by the burden which lay upon me of driving home every evening the cows for milking.

Of the cleverness of a cow on a hot summer afternoon to immure herself in bushes so as to be incommode to small boys, as well as flies, there has as yet been no sufficient recognition by writers on natural history. From an experience which caused me many pangs I can bear eloquent testimony to the subtlety of this apparently artless creature. My daily expeditions, however, gave me an opportunity for prosecuting more successfully one of the greatest sports of my boyhood. I cannot tell just when I commenced setting hare-traps, but of the great pleasure which it afforded me I have the liveliest recollection. I well remember the first hare I ever caught, and how, bearing the trap in my arms, I ran home and, bursting into the various rooms of

---

the sleeping family, announced with shouts of joy and pride my achievement. To succeed in this enterprise it is all-important to know where to set your traps. The trap must be set in a "hare path" or at a "gnaw"—the latter being a point in a fence where hares are accustomed to pass through, as evidenced by scratches and gnawed places upon the bottom rails. And so I turned my pilgrimages in search of cows to good account, and located the places frequented by hares with an accuracy born of long and persistent searchings.

There are few more delightful experiences in the life of a small boy than to slip out of bed a frosty morning and, meeting his partner by appointment, go off to visit the traps. All the world's asleep. The feeling of loneliness, the subtle light of the early dawn, the indistinctness of objects half hid in the shadows,—all serve to stimulate interest and invest the expedition with an air of adventure. When nearing the trap alternate hopes and fears course through his mind. Hope is raised by seeing the trap down, only to be dashed to earth by finding it empty; while again the day is made glorious by finding the hare safe inside—this wild thing of the woods—his captive. Sometimes a still greater joy awaits him, when instead of a hare

he finds an opossum. But to catch an opossum in a hare-trap is most unsportsmanlike, for the capture of that crafty quadruped is the sport of other and far more picturesque surroundings.

As the wild boar and stag are in some countries the special game of royalty, so in Virginia the 'possum seems to have been designed for the negro. With his dog—half hound and half cur—and his sharp axe, he goes forth in the darkness to seek his prey, like some knight to his tourney. Fortunate the boy who has the friendship of this Nimrod, and can join in the sport of following the dog as he tracks the 'possum to his tree or hollow. Captured, the game is borne home in triumph, where the joys of a miniature hog-killing, so dear to the heart of a negro and a boy, are reproduced in killing, and cleaning off his hairy coat. The next night the 'possum is served, banked in sweet potatoes and swimming in gravy, with ash-cake and buttermilk as the lesser attractions.

Only second in interest to hunting the 'possum is the sport when the raccoon is the prey. Indeed, the negro finds unfailing delight in killing or capturing 'possums, 'coons, rabbits, squirrels, weasels, minks, muskrats, wild-cats, and all that numerous company of four-footed creatures embraced in the catalogue of what he de-

nominates "varmint," and against which he long ago declared unrelenting warfare.

The queen feast of the year upon the farm was hog-killing time, in the joys of which I was a most appreciative participant. For weeks before the event the interest of all upon the place was aroused. Daily visits were made to the hog-pens, and learned discussions indulged apropos of the weight and qualities of their various inmates. Then upon the fateful morning, long before star or sun had heralded the approach of day, the great fires were lit and preparations completed for the slaughter. No boy could remain abed amid such scenes and happenings. Despite the repeated injunction of the negroes to "make way!" "keep back!" I was in evidence at every stage of the proceedings, and never left until all the occupants of the pens were suspended head downwards from the great racks upon which it was the custom to hang them. As trophies of the occasion I would bear off the pigtails, to be speedily devoured. As for the negroes, the fact that the great feast had come was to be seen in their shining faces, and general air of opulence and grease which plenty of chine, spare-ribs, jowls, souse, etc., etc., always invested them.

Among the pleasantest recollections of my childhood

are these and other like associations with the colored servants, and the interest which I felt in all their habits of thought and modes of living. Before the glowing wood-fires on their hearthstones I would sit and listen to the conversations of the old "Uncles" and "Aunts," as I was taught to call them, while they recounted their religious experiences, their stores of superstition and folk-lore, or told weird stories of what they had seen and heard in the shadowy land of ghosts and "hants." I thus learned how they regarded what they called "white folks' religion"—a system, they averred, derived from books, while theirs came by direct revelation from on High to every soul which had successively experienced the trials and triumphs of "conviction," "seeking" and "coming through." I remember the doleful countenances of the mourners while "under conviction" and during the sad days of "seeking"; and then their joy at "coming through." On such occasions the neophyte would clasp the hand of some old brother, and recount in a sing-song monotone how, while in the lowlands of sorrow, the Lord had appeared and placed their feet upon the rock and showed them their names written in the Book of Life; the Father-Confessor meanwhile interspersing their recitals

with such ejaculations as “Talk on, my sister! Don’t be afeered. Proclaim aloud what the Lord has done for your soul.”

Among many the belief in sorcery was strong, and I have heard heart-stirring accounts of how people had been “tricked” or “fixed” by the wiles of conjurers, who would work their spells upon the unsuspecting. Mysterious ingredients in little bundles, placed under the door-sill or hung in bottles near the spring, were the outward signs of the agencies used by these sorcerers; while racking pains, lizards and other small animals in the bodies of the victims, or sometimes death, were the manifestations of their power. Portents and signs were firmly believed in and acted on. The bay-ing of the watch-dog, the hooting of an owl, the cackling of the chickens at unusual hours of the early morning, were harbingers of death or serious calamity. To plant potatoes or other like vegetables on the “dark of the moon” would result in a large growth of tops, but very small crops of fruit; while the meat of hogs killed at a like time would all run away in gravy.

Mr. Lecky in one of his works—his “History of European Morals,” I believe—has very beautifully described what he terms “The Flight of the Fairies.”

He tells of the widespread belief in fairies which existed for ages among certain classes—how every mountain gorge and lowland valley was peopled with these gentle little sprites. Belief in their existence was as real as the woodland scenes amongst which they dwelt. Silently and almost imperceptibly the faith faded and men awoke with surprise and regret to find that the fairies were gone. No such experience had come to the negroes of my childhood time. Their faith in the visits of shadowy forms and spirits from other realms was unshaken. Scarcely one could be found who had not seen ghosts—the mysterious frequenters of graveyards and ancient dwellings. Still more well attested was the existence of “hants,” as the negroes termed them, which were to be encountered at night in almost every deserted and gruesome place. These “hants” took the form of black cats of portentous mien and size, wingèd horses, men without heads, and other like forbidding apparitions. I have listened to accounts of these strange specters until my heart would rise in my throat and I would tremble at the thought of being left alone in the dark.

Apropos of my association with the servants I must not omit to mention two little colored boys, Billy and



---

Dick by name, who were oftentimes among my playmates, and always welcome because of their unfailing willingness to serve as horses for my little wagon, privates in the ranks of my militia and burden-bearers in all my expeditions. Across the long gap of intervening years I recall with kindest recollections the picture of their bright faces and ragged forms.

I have mentioned the pleasure which I found in catching hares and hunting 'possums, but of the far more inspiring sport of hunting with dog and gun the wealth of other game which fill the fields, marshes and forests of Tide-water Virginia, I had little experience. The bane of the war period—"hard times"—still pursued me. I never during my boyhood had money enough to buy a gun. Thus the education of the typical Virginia boy to learn to shoot, to ride and to tell the truth, was in my case as to the first item sadly neglected.

But while I rarely enjoyed the royal sport of hunting with dog and gun, yet I found constant delight in making expeditions into the woods on and adjacent to my father's farm. Everything about them appealed to some sense of joy and interest. Their mysterious depths of gloom and silence; their wealth of berries,

grapes and nuts; and their wild denizens of beasts, birds and reptiles,—all served to invest them with unfailing attraction to my boyish heart. They constituted a charmed region where I could gratify all the emotions of quest and conquest.

Closely associated with these forests were certain streams and ponds, and the opportunities for sport and pleasure which they afforded. Since the days of which I write I have visited many waters far-famed for their beauty, but Loch Katrine and the Lakes of Killarney pale before two placid sheets, rejoicing in the prosaic names of “Tutter’s Neck” and “Durfey’s Mill-pond,” where I fished in summer and skated in winter.

Of the delights of fishing I need not pause to speak. From the days of Izaak Walton down to Dr. Van Dyke the ancient art of angling has had not only its troops of devotees, but a brilliant array of champions to recount its glories. But charming as this sport confessedly is, these ponds took on for me their greatest charm when locked in winter’s icy embrace—their smooth surfaces thronged with happy skaters. How novel and inspiring the scene! The long winding pond a sheet of ice, the dark forests of pine and holly fringing its borders, the bright fires here and there

along the shore, the gay company of skaters rhythmic with life and motion,—all combined to form a picture as picturesque to the eye as the sport was stimulating to the heart.

This, above all others, was the chance for a bashful boy to play the gallant to the girl of his choice. His strength and skill gave him a certain precedence, while the dangers of the sport afforded welcome opportunities for shielding his gentle charge. With every sense alive to the joys of the moment, I would clasp the little hand at my side, and then off together “on the wings of the wind” to the enchanted land, the surest guides to which are Youth and Love.

Of my many schemes for making money I have the liveliest recollections. A plan arranged after the most mature deliberation was to buy a hen, from the sale of whose eggs I was to buy a small pig; then rear it to full size and from its sale, and the accumulated income from my hen, purchase a condemned army-horse, price some twenty dollars, and, with the latter and my original hen and her progeny, set up a system of farming for myself on my father’s place. This plan was gone over and over in my mind; the hours brightened with the hopes of glorious fruition. In its execu-

tion I progressed as far as the purchase of the hen and pig.

To the rearing and fattening of that pig I devoted many months of my life. Everything I could find or beg, conducive to the help and health of a pig, I carried to his pen ; but from some cause he never prospered, and I at length sold him for a few cents more than the sum originally invested. Another source from which I derived revenue was by the sale of old bones, supplemented occasionally with old iron, brass and rags. The great slaughter-houses and camps of the Federal troops, so long stationed on our own and the adjoining farms, furnished the source of supply. With my faithful allies, Billy and Dick, whose services were rendered much after the fashion of vassals to their lord, I scoured the country, and often the little caravan might be seen, myself in the lead, each member bearing a bag of bones upon his bent back, wending its way to the junk dealer. I remember the old dealer, and especially the shot-bag in which he kept what seemed to me his great wealth.

I do not remember now what particular use I made of the proceeds of these expeditions, except that upon one occasion I devoted my accumulations, in collaboration

---

---

with a schoolmate, to giving a party. My friend was to furnish the lemons, I the cake. Invitations to the party were sent out, the number of guests being limited to the amount of our resources; but, relying upon the probability that a certain percentage of those invited would not come, we increased our list accordingly. On the evening in question, my friend appeared bringing his lemons, not, however, the full number upon which we had relied. At the last moment my younger brother had been permitted to invite a few of his small friends, in return for a much-needed moneyed contribution. This sum was invested in sugar-kisses, the candy of which would prove a welcome addition to our repast, and the love-verses a source of great assistance in incipient love-affairs, as well as an aid to conversation. Our guests soon began to arrive, and with the appearance of each boy or girl upon whose absence we had counted, the fears and embarrassment of myself and friend steadily increased. At last every guest invited was present, and the conviction forced itself upon our minds that there would be a serious shortage in the lemonade. A hurried conference resulted in the stern resolve to drink no lemonade ourselves and to request a like course on the part of our more intimate boy-friends.

This momentary gleam of hope, however, was soon dashed to the ground by the arrival of a number of students, who, with an audacity characteristic of their kind, had come uninvited, though they explained they had only intended to drop in after supper and take part in the dance. My friend and I, however, realized that they were there in time for supper and would devour our substance as well as monopolize our favorite girls, for the latter were proverbial for their disposition to leave school-boys when students appeared on the scene. Here was a situation. The entertainment was at my home. I would feel the full force of the embarrassment occasioned by the premature consumption of all the lemonade, while thirsty boys and girls stood appealing. I was on the eve of beating a most ignominious retreat and refusing to lead the march to supper, when my friend glided to my side and dispelled every fear by whispering the reassuring words: "It's all right. Let them drink. We'll have lemonade enough, unless the well runs dry."

I was always delighted when I received an invitation to a party. I never knew the time when I did not fancy myself in love with some little girl-acquaintance. Neither had reached the age when visits were made or

received, and so it was only at such gatherings that I had an opportunity of seeing the object of my affections. I never ventured to avow my feelings. Such a course would, doubtless, have involved us both in dire confusion. I relied upon the entranced expression of my face, or the warm clasp of my hand in the dance, to bear to her the gentle message. Like so many of my boyhood pleasures, these occasions, too, were not without their shadows. My Sunday or "company clothes," as they were called, were a source of great concern and no little mortification. They were generally made at home, and so possessed a style and set unknown to any fashion-plate, ancient or modern. Then in summer I went barefoot. No matter how our heart and feet may be attuned to the cadences of the dance, it is impossible to gracefully tread its figures without some species of foot-gear other than that with which nature has provided us. Especially is this true when one's feet are disabled with stone-bruises, stump toes, and other like infirmities characteristic of a country boy. To my doleful suggestions that my appearance was not befitting these festive occasions, or conducive to my success as a beau, I was always met with the remark, doubtless designed to be comforting: "Run along; nobody

will notice you. It 's all right if you are clean." Nobody would notice me! Small comfort, indeed! To be noticed was the one great ambition nearest my heart. Then the suggestion, "If I was clean!" My hands in summer partook of the shade of russet brown which comes from cider-making, a pastime in which I often indulged. In the fall they acquired a dark mahogany color—stains from the hulls of new walnuts—while in winter the contents of my trouser pockets—tops, marbles, nails and lead bullets, especially the latter—gave them a gloss very much resembling stove-polish.

One of the joys of my boyhood was music. Not that I had the advantages of any musical instruction, or ever heard grand opera, or a great musician, but simply that I loved harmonies: whether the soft lullabies of some old colored mammy, the stirring chorus of a group of schoolboys or the solemn roll of the grand *Te Deum*.

There were few more picturesque occasions, nor any which appealed more strongly to a boy's heart, than an old-time wheat harvest in Virginia. The field waving in its wealth of golden grain; the cradlers, binders and shockers with their glowing black faces, crowned here and there with white turbans or red bandanas; the measured cadence of the swinging cradles, as strong



arms bore them on through the falling grain ; the eager boys following on in search of partridge nests or to catch young rabbits ; the cheery call of the workers for “ More water ! ” and above all the rich mellow notes of the negro voices as they sang the harvest songs,—all combined to make a scene most picturesque and inspiring. No feature of these long-looked-for and much-enjoyed occasions appealed so strongly to me as the singing, and time and again I would run along beside the leading cradler, urging him to start the song. Doubtless that sturdy Virginian, Cyrus McCormick, conferred a great boon upon humanity, and helped the march of progress when he invented his reaper ; but he destroyed one of the most picturesque institutions of rural Virginia, and of every land where negro cradlers were accustomed, with so many incidents of joy and adventure, to reap the ripened grain.

Another occasion well remembered for its music was the corn-shucking—totally different, however, in incidents and surroundings from those which characterized the former scenes. The harvest music was rendered under a glowing summer sun by marching corps, urged on by the prowess of leaders and the inspiration of martial song. The workers at the corn-shucking

sang under the soft light of the moon in the cool crisp air of October nights, seated in groups around the great corn pile, the task of shucking which, must be accomplished before admission to the glories of the midnight meal. The music of the wheat harvest was martial and inspiring; that of the corn-shucking religious and sympathetic.

A custom in Williamsburg, which had come down unchanged from olden days, was that of serenading. Coteries of musicians, usually with violins and banjos, would set out soon after midnight upon their rounds. The personnel of the party was kept a secret, and in like manner they preferred that music should be the first intimation of their presence. It seemed to invest the compliment paid the fair one with an added interest, and to lend a touch of romance, to have her dreams first stirred by the strains of harps and voices which came mysteriously from some unknown source. I would hear the music of these strolling minstrels, and quickly leaving my bed, hie away and become a most appreciative, if not a bidden, member of the band. I kept so quiet, and showed such an appreciation both of the music and the spirit of the expeditions, that I was at first tolerated and then welcomed into quasi-member-

ship. My great regret was my inability to perform upon any instrument, but this difficulty was partially removed by my being appointed to play the triangle, a part as minor in place as the instrument is simple in technique and construction. There was a certain pride in my boyish heart at thus being breveted by these masters, and I later received additional recognition of my talent by being called to a position in the amateur brass band, which on occasions marched at the head of the volunteer company and dispensed music to the great delight of the small urchins and colored population of the town.

As I look back, however, the music which I heard in the old church seems to awaken the sweetest memories and to strike notes in my heart which reverberate with the softest sound. Around the old sanctuary cluster many associations. I recall the Christmas season, and how the boys and girls joined in the week's work of dressing the church. Into the wreaths of running cedar and holly, the love and laughter of those happy hearts were woven.

I will not attempt any description of the church. It stands to-day as it has stood for some two centuries, unchanged except as the English ivy, which covers its

eastern walls, has become denser, and the names upon tombstones in its aisles and under the shadow of its walls have become less and less distinct. The font, formerly in the Jamestown church and the one from which, according to tradition, Pocahontas was baptized, has a place in the chancel; the golden chalice and the paten presented by Queen Anne is used in the Holy Communion; the bell, justly celebrated for its silver tone, calls the people as of old to worship; the services of prayer and praise still follow the usage and sympathies of the Fathers. All is redolent of the past and of a certain fixedness which seems to say, "The gates of change shall not prevail against it." The inscriptions upon the memorial tablets in its walls, as well as on the tombstones in its aisles and in the yard, many of them in Latin, not a few bearing heraldic devices,—recount the short annals of men and women who bravely bore their parts in the life of the countryside. Occasionally they tell of men who figured in the great world beyond. Of this latter class is the tablet to Sir Daniel Parke. He bore the tidings of the great victory at Blenheim to Queen Anne. Her Majesty, in recognition of his service, asked what favor she could confer. With a touch of gallantry and presumption

he requested her picture, which so pleased the Queen that she presented him her miniature, set in diamonds, and made him a knight.

As before stated, I found great pleasure in the music heard in this old church. On Sundays I would watch the arrival of the various members of the choir, always hopeful that there would be a full attendance. I had little fancy for soprano solos, but delighted in a chorus. I greatly enjoyed the *Te Deum* and the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and felt a sort of personal grievance if the *Gloria Patri* instead of the latter was sung after the *Psalter*. But it was the *Trisagion* which most of all impressed me, and I would often remain during communion to hear this solemn anthem. When over the bowed heads of the people would rise the trembling notes of the invocation, "Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious name," I would feel my boyish heart strangely moved and catch some of the spirit of devotional worship which pervades the beautiful service.

My interest in the music quickened an ambition to become a member of the choir, or, at least, to have an entrée to its precincts. Accordingly, I often lingered

after morning service to hear the practising: then I ventured into the choir-loft, and finally the chance absence of the organ-blower gave me my opportunity. I volunteered my services, which were accepted. Thereafter many practisings found me at the bellows, and I improved the opportunities to identify myself with the body by encouraging comments and by retailing compliments, somewhat intensified, which I had heard with respect to their performances. Above all, I availed myself of these occasions to join in the singing. When the music rolled with its loudest swell, then from my post behind the organ I would lift my untrammelled voice, fairly reveling in the advantage which my position afforded me. In after years my ambition was gratified and I was promoted from my place behind the organ to a position in front, where I lustily sang to the edification, let us trust, of all the hearers.

I have thus recounted many of the scenes and incidents, joys and mishaps, of my boyhood. Seen through the softening light of intervening years, the retrospect seems most attractive. What boots it that tasks and lessons, empty pockets and uncouth clothes, were incidents of those early days? The joys of youth were

there and a boy's heart and hope to meet and vanquish every ill.

“ Blessings on thee, little man,  
Barefoot boy with cheek of tan !  
With thy turned-up pantaloons  
And thy merry whistled tunes.  
Let the million-dollared ride !  
Barefoot, trudging at his side,  
Thou hast more than he can buy  
In the reach of ear and eye—  
From my heart I give thee joy,  
I was once a barefoot boy.”





## CHAPTER IV

### *College Days*



AT the age of fifteen I entered William and Mary College. I was ill prepared for this step. The system of discipline and instruction which prevailed, though sanctioned by many years of successful usage, could not secure the best results with a boy of my age and inadequate preparation. Students could select for themselves, within certain limits, their course of studies. Attendance at chapel was optional. In all matters of deportment they were simply admonished to observe the standards which control gentlemen. Nothing akin to espionage, either at recitations or examinations, was in vogue, but students were put upon their honor. These ideals and methods, while most helpful for older students, were not so satisfactory in



---

the case of a young boy who needed the careful oversight and discipline of the school-room rather than the liberty of college halls. However, my Alma Mater not only stood ready to open her treasures, but in the years of my stay I was the recipient of blessings and benefits which cannot be measured.

The very atmosphere which invests the old college is stimulating. No school-man or patriot can regard her and the part which she has borne in our country's history without quickened interest and pride. She is the oldest college in America—Harvard excepted. Many of the leading patriots and sages of the Revolutionary period went forth from her walls. Before the Revolution she was the inspiring center of the best thought and culture of the colony. Though the child of England's King and Queen, her sons were the foremost architects of the Republic. Washington received his first commission—surveyor of public lands—from her hands, and in after years was her chancellor. Here Jefferson's theories of government and the rights of man were molded, as he declares, by the lectures of Professor Small. While a student, James Monroe enlisted in the Revolutionary army. Under her venerable law professor, George Wythe, John Marshall was

trained for his work as the Great Chief Justice. Men without number, who filled eminent stations in the state and national governments and made their names famous in the forum and the field, were counted among her alumni. She was honored as having led in the adoption of new methods and in establishing institutions which proved in time the wisdom of their founders. Thus she was the first college in this country to announce the elective system of study; the first to establish chairs for the study of history, modern languages and law; the first to award collegiate medals, and the first to adopt the honor system in conducting examinations. Here was the first school for the Christian education of Indians, and here was founded the now celebrated Phi Beta Kappa, the first intercollegiate fraternity in the United States.

Her success and renowns were not without periods of trial and disaster. Thrice had she been visited by disastrous fires, and the Revolutionary and Civil wars alike closed her doors and destroyed large parts of her patrimony. Misfortunes, however, only served to draw about her with more filial affection the hearts of her devoted children. Truly it may be said of her, as Mr. Webster, with tear-dimmed eyes, declared in his great

---

speech in the Dartmouth College case, "It is a small college, but there are those who love her."

The charm and inspiration of the place, its history and associations have been time and again depicted. Miss Glasgow in her recent novel, "The Voice of the People," makes the following allusion to the impression which the college made upon the mind of her somewhat unimpressible hero: "For the first time those grimy walls, which had been thrice overthrown and had thrice risen from their ashes, impressed him with the triumphant service they had rendered in the culture of his kind. The long line of illustrious hands, which had procured its ancient charter, seemed to wave a ghostly benediction over its ancient learning. Clergy and Burgesses, Council and Governor, Planters and Bishops of London, had stood by its birth. It was the fruit of the union of the old world and the new, and it had waxed strong upon the milk of its mother ere it turned rebel. Later to its younger country it had sent forth its sons as statesmen, who gave glory to its name, and through all its history it had overcome calamity and defied assault."

Like the college, the surrounding country is replete with historic scenes and associations. The narrow pen-

insula, between the James and York rivers, was the theater of the earliest struggles of our forefathers with the Indians: the conflicts of Bacon's rebellion and many of the great battles of the Revolution and the Civil War. Here the all-conquering Anglo-Saxon, braving the prowess of Spain and the untried dangers of Indians and wilderness, made his first settlement upon the shores of the New World. Jamestown, John Smith, Pocahontas, Sir William Berkeley, Nathaniel Bacon, Lord Dunmore, Patrick Henry, George Washington, Comte de Rochambeau, Lafayette, Yorktown, Fortress Monroe, Hampton Roads, The Monitor and Merrimac, McClellan, Grant, Lee, Jackson, Bethel, Malvern Hill and Cold Harbor are names to conjure with, and quicken in the mind of youth increasing interest in the wonderful story of our people's genesis and progress. As the potency of the principles and events with which these names are associated becomes more distinct to the mind of the student, they prove a source of inspiration and advance. To this atmosphere which pervades the college and its environments, I attribute in no small degree the taste which I early manifested for history and the increasing pleasure and profit with which I still regard that study. Not the history

of events, recorded in their bare chronological order, but the causations and sequences; the evolution of principles, the establishment of institutions as the results of conflicts in council, forum and field,—often far remote in time and place from the hour of fruition,—and the evident forward movement, despite set-backs and failures, of the condition, thought and conscience of mankind.

Political economy and the science of government were also favorite studies. My professor, the Rev. Dr. George T. Wilmer, early indoctrinated me with the theory that the government which governs least governs best; that only so much of the citizen's liberty as is absolutely essential to the public good should be restrained; that the community should retain the discharge of all the functions which it can exercise, only delegating to the general government the control of matters evidently beyond its province; that any interference with the freedom of contracts and commerce is to be deplored; that all exemptions from the burdens common to the mass of the citizenship are wrong; that the bestowal of special privileges and advantages by the government are a perversion of its powers, and that in the last analysis its proper function is simply to keep

clear the great highway along which each citizen without help or hindrance must work out for himself the problem of his future and destiny. I need not say that these ideas are largely those of Mr. Jefferson and other thinkers and statesmen of his school of thought.

Moral philosophy and English were also among my favorite studies, but Greek and mathematics proved tasks little to my liking. My Greek professor tried to awaken my ambition by recalling the scholarly achievements of my grandfather in his translation of Homer's Iliad, but despite this and the nobility of the Greek language, I made but indifferent progress. With Latin I was more successful, and especially enjoyed reading Virgil. My attainments in Greek and Latin, however, were so meager that I had little true appreciation of the incomparable works of either of these great poets.

Upon the monument to Dante at Florence are the words which he himself addressed to Virgil: "Honor the sublime poet!" Could I recall my student days I would give life to this invocation by braver efforts to master the noble languages glorified by the genius of Homer and Virgil.

Among the hindrances which kept me from my

---

books I must reckon my fondness for society. Parties, theatricals, and social gatherings of all kinds, possessed for me a fascination. I greatly enjoyed visiting, and many an evening found me in some of the hospitable homes of Williamsburg, basking in the smiles of her fair daughters. I may as well here confess that from my boyhood I had the keenest appreciation of the attractions of the other sex. I will not say with the poet, "My only books were women's looks," but I own she proved a formidable rival to Clio and her sister muses. That her beauty and purity often awakened my affection and reverence, goes without saying. It was not, however, these traits alone which possessed for me the subtlest charm. There were others—more indefinable and illusory. Her dissimilarity to my kind in taste and temperament, her piquancy and audacity, mingled with gentleness and devotion; her air of the artistic, and quality of the picturesque,—all serve to invest her with ever-recurring interest and lift her far away from the realm of the prosaic and commonplace. Added to these the sweet suggestion of her kinship with the skies, or, as Wordsworth puts it—

"And yet a spirit still and bright,  
With something of an angel light."

My career in the debating society of the college was more creditable, and I look back to my experiences with much pleasure and no little amusement. I recall my first appearance in the "noble art of debate," as the constitution of our society termed it. The question was, "Is war a moral duty?" I do not remember what I said,—indeed, I had little consciousness at the time, such was my terror and confusion,—but I won what I always regarded as a victory over myself, in that I at least attempted to speak without a manuscript. The ability to think upon one's feet, as it is termed, can only be acquired by such practice; while the power to impress and move an audience is largely dependent upon the magnetic influence which flows from the speaker. His eyes should join with his voice in bearing his message, which should come from a soul so stirred as not to need the aid of manuscript to remind him of its purport.

A volume of Shakespeare for excellence in declamation, and a gold medal awarded as the best debater in our society, are some reminders of my early triumphs.

The habit of hazing did not prevail at William and Mary, but there did exist a custom of playing tricks



---

upon new students which afforded me a great deal of innocent amusement. A frequent practice was to initiate freshmen into mock fraternities. I will describe one such experience, and in loving memory of that delightful story of college life at Oxford—"Verdant Green"—I give my hero that suggestive title.

On the night in question a committee from among the older students would call upon Mr. Green and inform him of his election to membership in the Chi Phi Chi—or whatever mysterious title we had selected for our supposed fraternity. A favorable response from our friend Verdant followed, and soon arm-in-arm with his supposed friends he left the kindly shelter of his own room. Before they had gone far on their journey he was told that as they neared the sacred precincts of the "temple" they would, in accordance with an ancient custom, blindfold him and tie his hands. The effect upon the nerves of a neophyte in thus being deprived of his sight and the use of his hands may be well imagined; especially as his guardians would from time to time adjure him not to be unduly alarmed at the stirring character of the rites; that he would doubtless come through all right,—at least, without any broken bones or the loss of any limbs. Arriving at the

“temple,” Green was admitted, but not until many mysterious knocks had been sounded and whispered conferences between his guards and the supposed representative of the grand vizier. A march around the “temple” next followed; the tramp of students’ feet in unison, as they sat or stood about the room, producing the impression of the presence of a mighty company. A rope was then placed around the neck of the candidate and he was conducted to the altar, before which he knelt and took an oath, following the high priest as the latter recited it. By this oath our friend covenanted under penalties of death, by every form of torture, to answer truthfully every question propounded by the grand vizier, obey every command of that august dignitary, and generally to observe, without faltering or deviating, the instructions of his guards and the officials of the order.

Having their victim thus completely in their power, his tormentors proceeded to ask him all sorts of questions and to compel him to speak and preach upon various subjects. His views upon Theosophy, the Binomial Theorem, the proper procedure to observe in courting, the scope of his ambitions, etc., etc., were required under threatened penalties and given with many falter-

---

ings and overwhelming confusion. Finally the candidate was informed that his preliminary examination was satisfactory, and that he would be conducted by a suitable guard to the grand portal of the inner shrine, upon gaining admission to which he would, with befitting ceremonies, be elevated to the sublime mysteries of the great Chi Phi Chi. Accordingly he was again led forth, still blindfolded and tied, and conducted most stealthily to the front door of the dwelling of some citizen, selected because of his well-known brusqueness and asperity of manner. En route he would be told that only one more trial awaited him—his steady refusal to do aught, except give the password, when accosted by the sentinel at the portal to the inner shrine. He was informed that at this portal, after the sign had been given (which consisted of three knocks), his guards would leave him, but that the continued reiteration of the password “Keno” would finally satisfy the sentinel and secure him admission. It was a unique spectacle, as the two students, having our friend blindfolded and tied, stood at the hour of midnight before the front door of some sleeping citizen, while their comrades hid themselves in the grounds about the dwelling, so as to be within ear-shot of what was said. The

fateful moment had arrived, when, giving three resounding knocks upon the door, the guards would slip away, admonishing their victim to stand firm and trust to the watchword. Soon the suddenly awakened and irate householder, candle in hand, might be heard unbarring the door, and demanding in stentorian tones to know what was meant by this assault upon his home. In response came the feeble voice of the frightened victim saying " Keno! Keno!" To every demand and threatening of the outraged citizen this same answer would be returned, until at length, perhaps holding his candle a little higher, he would catch a full view of his supposed assailant and then the truth would dawn upon him. With mingled disgust and amusement he would gruffly inform the still deluded candidate for Chi Phi Chi honors that the students were making a fool of him, and slam the door in his face. As he retired his voice might still be heard warning our astonished friend to get away, and that quickly, or he would set the dogs upon him. Then the students would come forward to the relief of the astonished Verdant, and with many felicitations escort him home, making the welkin ring as they sang, " For he 's a jolly good fellow, which nobody can deny," an air in which the victim would feebly

---

join, but with many misgivings as to the truth of the sentiment.

Sometimes this inventive mischievousness of the students would be turned against the professors, and the latter would often find their lecture-rooms decorated little to their liking, or songs would ring out and acrostics would appear reciting their virtues and infirmities in strains of clever satire. Occasionally the clapper of the college bell would be kidnapped, and the ancient statue of Lord Botetourt would be decked out in cap and gown or other insignia little befitting his dignity. This statue was erected by the general assembly of the colony to this, the best beloved of all the colonial governors, and in rather sonorous terms its inscription recites the virtues of the Right Honorable Norborne Berkeley, Baron de Botetourt. The many years during which his lordship has buffeted the assaults of the undergraduates of William and Mary have left their impress, while the Federal soldiers, who, during the Civil War, made different portions of his anatomy targets for their bullets, have deprived him of his nose and decapitated several of the allegorical figures on his marble pedestal.

I have the kindest recollections of my fellow-students.

Reckoning the number in attendance during the four years of my stay, they will compare most favorably in intellectual attainments with those of any other like institution in the land. Jennings and Yelverton Garnett, Cannon and Henry Wise Hobson, Breckenridge Wilmer, Henry C. Coke, Robert M. Hughes, James Lindsay Gordon, J. Allen Watts, Bankhead Thornton, Bathurst Peachy, Wm. P. Kent, Carey Armistead, Robert L. Christie, Dennison Cole and Richie Stone are among those whose names come back to me, fragrant with the association of those halcyon days. Some have passed on to join the great majority, while others are filling their several rôles in life with the success and credit of which they gave such promise in their student days.

Of Jennings Wise Garnett, who commenced his college career with me at William and Mary, it is difficult to speak in terms of moderation. He was a man of brilliant mental endowments, with a most remarkable capacity for assimilating knowledge. His disposition was as lovely and lovable as his mind was brilliant. In face and form he looked like some young Grecian fresh from the Olympian games. After a career of unprecedented success at William and Mary, he entered the

University of Virginia, where even greater triumphs awaited him. Crowned with his many honors, which he so modestly wore, he went forth into life the idol of his kindred and comrades, and an inspiration to all with whom he came in contact. Then death called him! For what purpose such an intellect—such a heaven-lit soul—gone hence, while yet it was dawn, if the dead rise not again?

As I think of him the lines of Armistead Gordon, one of our Virginia poets, addressed to his memory, come to my mind.

“I fancy that your soul somewhere to-night  
Rejoices in the glow of Shakespeare’s smile;  
That Bacon’s luminating thoughts beguile  
Your knowledge-craving spirit; that the light  
Of Shelley’s face shines on your enraptured sight;  
That Marlowe’s song is ringing in your ears,  
And yet to my unwilling eyes the tears  
Steal tremulously up, my cheek grows white;  
Can Shakespeare’s smile and Shelley’s beauty keep  
Your spirit so entranced no thought will stray  
Back to this nether planet where we weep?  
Is our old night-time lost in your new day?  
Ah, no! For sweet though Marlowe’s song may be,  
And Bacon’s words, you walk no less to-night with  
me.”

Of the professors with whom I came in contact, I have the kindest recollections. In addition to the Rev. Dr. Wilmer, to whom I have already referred, I recall Dr. Richard A. Wise, Professor Charles Dodd, Rev. Dr. Lyman B. Wharton, and Professor Thomas L. Sneed. But the foremost man of the faculty in the affections of the student-body was the President, Colonel Benjamin S. Ewell, or as the students called him, when not in his presence, "Old Buck." No disrespect was intended by this appellation, for as above intimated, he was regarded with genuine affection by all the undergraduates. It was a most grateful duty, many years after my student days, to present to the College, on behalf of the alumni, the memorial tablet placed upon the walls of the chapel in memory of this venerable president. A few lines from the address which I delivered on that occasion may serve to show the position which he occupied with respect to the College, and in the estimation of the students:

"It would indeed be a grateful task to portray at length his life and character, but time will not permit. I desire, however, to point out what seemed to be the great motif of his life,—the strain which through all the years of his mature man-



hood throbbed with strongest beat,—namely, his great love for the College of William and Mary, his pride in her illustrious history, and his efforts to make her future equal her glorious past. Linked with his love for the College was his warm interest in the young manhood which gathered in her halls—sympathy for its failures, hopes for its aspirations and a charity for its foibles which would cover a multitude of sins.”

My feelings with respect to the College itself are most sympathetic, and may be well expressed by another quotation from the address just referred to:

“I would make this occasion, and the memories which it awakens, a source of inspiration to revive our love for our Alma Mater, and the aspirations quickened when we were children at her knee. Under the spell of her teachings, and before the world had dimmed our ardor, there stirred within us impulses and yearnings which it were well to bring back to our lives. Her benign influence calls only to hope, and energy, and high resolves.

“Let me repeat in your hearing, my fellow-alumni and students of William and Mary, the words of Matthew Arnold, unequalled in beauty of expression and sentiment, which he addressed to his Alma Mater: ‘Steeped in sentiment as she lies,

spreading her gardens to the moonlight, and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Ages, who will deny that Oxford, by her ineffable charm, keeps ever calling us nearer to the true goal of us all—to the ideal, to perfection, to beauty, in another word, which is only truth seen from another side.’ ”

I had long cherished an ambition to become a lawyer, and so, my college days over, I returned to my father's home in Botetourt, to which he had removed, intent if possible upon carrying this aspiration into effect. My father had been in his early manhood a practising lawyer, while my grandfather, William Munford, the author of the Virginia Reports bearing the name, had been quite eminent in the profession. So it seemed a not unreasonable ambition that I should wish to follow in their footsteps. Between me and the attainment of my desire, however, loomed a great barrier—the want of money with which to secure the necessary legal education, and to support myself during the years of waiting which is the usual lot of the young attorney. My father fully sympathized with me, and with characteristic generosity set about making arrangements to enable me to enter the law school of the University of

Virginia. My hopes were high, and the future seemed assured, when suddenly the prospect was completely changed by my father's death.

Of my father I must pause to say a word of affectionate remembrance. He was a high type of the Virginia gentleman—the best product of the ante-bellum days. Chivalrous, honorable, refined—a great lover of books, and with no small degree of literary taste and attainment. To write poetry or pore over the pages of some favorite author possessed for him far more attraction than the status of his bank-account or the condition of his larder. He was generous and courteous, something of a dreamer, with a touch of knightly impulsiveness. He had little of the controversialist or sceptic in his make-up. He walked in the old paths, accepting the faiths and standards which he learned at his mother's knee. Among those who knew and loved him best he was often likened to Thackeray's hero, Colonel Newcome, and I myself can see not a few points of similarity in their characters. His last days, spent in part as I have said, in devising plans for my future, were characteristic of his gentle and unselfish life. When the final call came it found him ready, only regretful that he had not accomplished more to

honor his Maker and help his kind. Of the peaceful, trusting spirit which marked the close, I will not speak, except to quote the familiar lines of Thackeray:

“ At the usual evening hour the chapel bell began to toll, and Thomas Newcome’s hands, outside the bed, feebly beat time, and just as the last bell struck a peculiar sweet smile shone over his face, and he lifted up his head a little and quickly said ‘ Adsum!’ and fell back. It was the word we used at school when names were called, and lo! he whose heart was as that of a little child, had answered his name, and stood in the presence of the Master.”

My cherished ambition would doubtless have received a permanent set-back by my father’s death but for the generosity of my brother-in-law, Judge James Doddridge Coles. From him I received an invitation to read law in his office, and during the time make his house my home. Of the welcome character of this invitation I cannot speak except in terms of sincerest appreciation. The act was indicative of the man,—the soul of kindness and generosity. With the most sympathetic interest he directed all my studies, and afterward assisted me no little during the trying days immediately following my admission to the Bar.

---

Judge Coles resided at Chatham, the county seat of Pittsylvania County, and thither I went in the fall of 1876. I was received in the most cordial way by the people of the town and county: a foretaste of the many kindnesses of which I was to be the recipient during the years of my sojourn in their midst.

From the day of my arrival until the following summer I devoted myself with great assiduity to the study of the law. On the whole I made satisfactory progress, and after nine months entered the Summer Law School at the University of Virginia. This was quite an event in my life. The atmosphere of the University and the contact with its famous law professor, John B. Minor, served to broaden my horizon and stir within me new hopes and aspirations.

My stay, though all too short, was very helpful, and I can recall now no summer of my life more pleasantly and profitably spent. Of Mr. Minor's powers as a teacher I need not speak. He had at that time filled his position for over forty years, and was destined to round out his half century of illustrious labors, as the oldest and most distinguished professor of Common and Statute Law in America.

The University itself, its location and architecture,

are well calculated to produce the most favorable impression. Unlike the majority of our institutions of learning, it is not an aggregation of buildings brought together at different periods without unity of design, but it came forth the product of one mind, a finished group; classic, harmonious and complete.

Upon a commanding plateau overlooking a beautiful expanse of green fields, vine-clad steppes, wooded hills and blue mountains, its great founder, Mr. Jefferson, marked its boundaries.

Every detail of its location and construction, as well as the character of its government and the ideal of its mission, bears the impress of this many-sided man. Over at Monticello one reads upon the granite shaft which marks his grave the record of the achievements for which he asked to be remembered by posterity: "Author of the Declaration of American Independence and the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia."

My nine-months study in the law office of Judge Coles enabled me to compass very successfully the course, which is especially designed for young lawyers and those who propose to continue their studies during the regular sessions of the University. I recall, how-

---

ever, one occasion of ignominious failure. It was the last day of the term. I had been selected by my class to present Professor Minor a testimonial of their regard, and I had spent my time preparing my address. Of the subject of the lecture I had not read a page. I sat in my seat conning over the lines of my speech when I was suddenly aroused from my reverie by a question from the Professor. My failures seemed to incite him to fresh efforts, and only the stroke of the bell, which marked the hour of adjournment, served to stop him in his harrowing career. Then it was with drooping feathers that I arose and delivered the speech whose preparation had been the occasion of my disgrace.

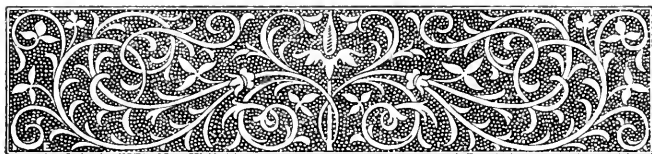
From the University I returned to Chatham in the fall of 1877, and again applied myself to the study of law in Judge Coles's office. My financial straits prevented me from returning to the University. I had then, as I have now, the liveliest appreciation of the loss thus occasioned me. For the same reason I felt compelled some six months later to apply for my license to practise law, though a continuance of my studies for a much longer period would have been far more advisable. Accordingly in February, 1878, I appeared be-

fore Judge William M. Tredway and Judge G. A. Wingfield for my examination. It was no sign of great erudition that I was able to stand this test, as the examinations then in vogue were far from difficult.

So it was that early in the year 1878 the long-looked-for hour arrived. Just twenty-one years of age, with a very modest sum in bank, twelve law-books in hand and a moderate knowledge of their contents, I stepped into the arena, where so many try and so many fail, and offered my services as Counselor and Attorney to a confiding public. Whatever my shortcomings, or the slender store of this world's goods with which my craft was freighted, I was young—hope and enthusiasm beat high—and with the poet I felt that “In the glorious lexicon of Youth there was no such word as ‘fail’.”







## CHAPTER V

### *Some Experiences at the Bar*



SHALL always regard it a fortunate circumstance that I commenced the practice of the law in the country. The cordiality of the lawyers, the neighborliness of the people, and above all, the opportunities

thus afforded for studying human nature in its many forms and phases, were circumstances which redounded both to my pleasure and profit. No where can the art of getting on with one's fellow-man, or measuring his character, sentiments, and prejudices, be more thoroughly acquired than amid the experiences of a county Court-room, or on the Court green in Old Virginia. Not only does the lawyer appear before a cloud of witnesses, but he must appreciate the stupidity, integrity, craftiness, patriotism and all other characteristics of that curious

aggregation denominated "the people." Unless the lawyer or man of affairs understands and reckons with these varying peculiarities, he is destined to slow success.

On the occasion of the session of the Court following the procurement of my license I was admitted to the Bar of the County Court of Pittsylvania. The trial of a criminal charged with arson was called. With characteristic kindness the senior counsel for the prisoner invited me to join him and his associate for the defense, suggesting that while no fee could be promised yet the opportunity would thus be afforded me to appear at the Bar—a great desideratum with a young lawyer. The trial resulted in a hung jury. My labors were confined to a speech, the highest encomium upon which was that of a friendly countryman, who assured me that I "never teched the earth from start to finish." Despite the somewhat doubtful character of my first effort, I was immediately employed for the defense in two petty criminal cases.

I will record my experience in one of these cases as it bore upon the matter of fixing and securing the fee—a feature of the practice which I subsequently found to be of great importance. A son had been indicted

---

for some petty offense, and the father and mother had retained an old lawyer and myself to defend him. We met to talk over the case and arrange the fee. The old lawyer suggested in confidence that I permit him to take charge of the negotiations for the fee, in which I of course readily acquiesced. After the case had been gone over, the wife, who in this instance seemed to be the head of the house, inquired as to the amount of the fee. My associate immediately assumed a very grave demeanor. He inquired whether our clients would pay cash, and on being answered in the negative, he then proceeded to ascertain what property they owned. It was found to consist of two horses, five head of cattle and a small farm, with the usual household and kitchen furniture, farming utensils, etc. He then delivered himself about as follows:

“This case is one of profound moment both to yourself and your son. It presents legal questions of unusual difficulty, and it will require great labor and the expenditure of much time to secure its proper presentation to the Court and Jury. In view of all this, and yet with every desire to bring the amount of our fee within easy reach of your ability to pay, I feel, and my brother Munford, I am sure, agrees with me, that if

you will send us one horse and four head of cattle we will be satisfied."

Profound silence followed this announcement, during which period my venerable associate knit his brow as if already burdened with the mental labors incident to the cause. Our female client soon broke the silence in a fervent protest against the amount of the fee. She portrayed the great value of the horse and cattle in question, and plead for a more moderate charge. My associate was obdurate, and met every appeal with unanswerable arguments. In reply to the insistence that the horse was absolutely necessary to enable them to raise their accustomed crops, he floored her with the reminder that they would not in the future need such large crops, in view of the fact that we would relieve them of the expense of caring for so many cattle. I preserved a discreet silence, only nodding my head from time to time with great solemnity in response to appeals from my associate.

When the interview ended, and I found myself contemplating the nucleus of a herd which should in due time rival that which Jacob tended, I could but commend a profession where knowledge, or its supposed possession, commanded such recognition and emolu-

ments. My appreciative reflections, however, were of short duration, for the trial over and the stock delivered, it then developed that a prior mortgage existed upon the blooded horse, while the cattle were of a size so diminutive as to be of little worth, except perchance to compensate supposed crafty but over-credulous lawyers.

Apropos of a young lawyer's experience in connection with his first fee, I will record that of my friend, the Hon. Claude A. Swanson, who a few years later was admitted to the same Bar.

One Philip Hardcastle had sued out an attachment against the tobacco crop of his delinquent tenant, Jasper Jenkins, whom he suspected, and not without cause, of spiriting it away without paying his rent. The tobacco had been sold by the officer and the proceeds brought into Court, to await the decision of a motion made by the defendant to abate the attachment and turn the proceeds of the tobacco over to him. As a rule, few attachment proceedings can stand the scrutiny and assaults of a well-posted lawyer. The statute requires the strictest compliance with its provisions, or the proceedings will be dismissed, the defendant's property re-

turned, with a right of action against the creditor for its illegal seizure. Of all this the counsel employed by Jenkins had some hazy notion, but his ideas and knowledge were not of that exact character which wins victories in such contests. In this dilemma he retained my friend Mr. Swanson, who had just returned from the law school at the University of Virginia as his associate.

I will not attempt to describe the trial which followed. Suffice it to say that Swanson drove a coach and four through the attachment proceedings. He pointed out with great precision the fatal defects in the plaintiff's papers, and with fervid eloquence portrayed the inalienable rights of the defendant and their violation by the plaintiff, who without the intervention of a jury to pass upon the right of the case had seized the defendant's property. With much more of like import the young attorney delivered himself, to the horror of the plaintiff, the wonder of the bystanders, and the great delight of old Jenkins and his senior counsel.

The trial over, an advantageous settlement was quickly made with Hardcastle, by which he agreed to release Jenkins from the rent due in return for a relinquishment by the latter of his claim for damages

for the illegal seizure of his tobacco. These preliminaries arranged, the three victors, client and attorneys, met to talk over the results and, as was thought by at least two of the party, to make a partition of the fruits of victory. A check representing the proceeds of Jenkins's labor and Swanson's services was held by the senior counsel, who during the conference gave it many endearing pats, while Jenkins's eyes rested upon it with an expression of mingled tenderness and fear. After many intimations from his associates as to the important matter for which they had assembled, the senior counsel brought the subject to a head and the conference to a close by the following deliverance:

“Jenkins! You have derived great benefit from the services of your counsel. Not only have you secured a release by Hardcastle of his claim against you for the rent without paying him one dollar, but above and beyond all, you have had your inalienable rights vindicated at the Bar of a Court of Justice. Swanson! Old fellow, you have had such an opportunity as rarely comes to a young attorney for displaying your learning and eloquence, and the reputation which you have made to-day will be of untold value to you in all the future years of your professional career. And now,

in view of all these facts, I trust and believe you gentlemen will allow me to retain this pittance [alluding to the check] as a fee for my onerous services in the case."

A moment of solemn silence followed this announcement, only broken at length by the amused exclamation of Swanson, "Well, Colonel! I believe you are right!" And linking his arm in that of his senior they departed, leaving old Jenkins to ruminate upon his inalienable rights and the luxury of securing their vindication in a Court of Justice.

There is no intellectual arena more stimulating than that presented in the practice of the law. The minds and hearts of judges and jurors are the forts to conquer. Knowledge of the law and acquaintance with human nature are the arsenals from which ammunition is drawn. Logical arguments, persuasive eloquence, tact and common sense, are the weapons of victory.

The Pittsylvania Bar at the time of which I write numbered among its resident and visiting members many men of unquestioned learning and ability. First and foremost among the resident lawyers must be mentioned the late James M. Whittle and Charles E. Dabney, both men profoundly read in legal lore and thor-



---

oughly versed in all the intricacies of common-law pleading. Then the Tredways, the Dillards, Judge James Doddridge Coles, John Gilmer, Major Langhorne Scruggs, Chiswell Dabney, George T. Rison and others. From Danville came a goodly number of well-equipped attorneys, led by R. W. Peatross and Judge Berryman Green. Among many from adjacent Bars were Major Charles M. Blackford of Lynchburg and Judge John W. Riely of Halifax, two of the ablest lawyers and most lovable men in Virginia. Two notable figures whom I very pleasantly recall were Colonel Elisha Barksdale, Jr., and Colonel Thomas S. Flournoy, who generally appeared as associate counsel. The former impressed me by his great skill as an examiner of witnesses, and the latter by his fervor and eloquence as an advocate. A few years later came two younger men, Claude A. Swanson and Andrew Jackson Montague, who from their first appearance gave abundant promise of the success and prominence which they have since achieved.

I have mentioned the sympathy evinced by the old lawyers in every new-comer, myself included. To help the young practitioner with advice and instruction, and to indoctrinate him in the traditions and ethics of the

profession, seemed obligations which they met with the readiest courtesy. The social side, too, of this intercourse was delightful and instructive. Reminiscences of the Bench and Bar of this country and Old England were favorite themes of conversation. The learning of judges as displayed in great opinions, and the achievements of advocates in marvelous efforts before Courts and Juries, these were recounted both for the pleasure of recalling the triumphs and as a stimulus to like endeavor. By precept and example the Nestors sought to inspire the younger members with the *esprit de corps* which should characterize the profession.

As time wore on I gradually built up the practice of a busy country lawyer. No great cases came to my office, but the experience was full of interesting incidents reflecting the life of the countryside. My fees were small, but my zeal was quickened by conflicts with opposing counsel—the impulse which prompts the attorney to make his client's cause his own—and the alluring prospects of fame and fortune which the law holds out to its faithful votaries.

Ten years of delightful association with my brethren of the Pittsylvania Bar and satisfactory progress in my profession followed, and then the scene changed by my removal to Richmond. The immediate cause

---

of this step was an offer from the late Judge Waller R. Staples to become his partner and open offices for the practice of our profession in the Capital City.

Of my friend Judge Staples, with whom I was associated as partner for nearly ten years, I cannot speak except in terms of the sincerest appreciation. My estimate of his character as a man and his accomplishments as a lawyer I publicly expressed in an address delivered before the Supreme Court of Virginia soon after his death. Great kindness of heart and simplicity of character were his distinguishing traits. His best claim to talent was a disposition and capacity for taking infinite pains. He often expressed to me his admiration for the law as a profession because it offered unlimited opportunities for effort and always returned appreciable results for every hour of labor bestowed. His well-considered and luminous opinions as a judge constitute a lasting memorial to his fame, but the profession little appreciate the immense labor which they cost their author. In deploring his want of capacity for quick work, he once informed me that some of his opinions were written and rewritten as many as four times before he felt satisfied with their structure and reasoning.

My experience as a city lawyer was in many respects

very different from that of a country practitioner. One of the principal changes was in the scenes incident to the trial of cases. In the country, large crowds were almost invariably present to hear the lawyers, and perforce to stimulate them to greater oratorical efforts. In the city, however, the attendance was ordinarily limited to the Court officials and the parties directly interested in the trial. This latter condition tended to deprive trials of their picturesqueness, besides rendering the verdict of the jury much less influenced by public opinion. In the country, especially in the trial of criminal cases and damage suits against corporations, public sentiment is a factor with which each side must reckon. Doubtless it was a knowledge of this fact that impelled a distinguished lawyer friend of mine, in defending a railroad company, to begin his argument as follows: "May it please the Court, you Gentlemen of the Jury, and you fellow-citizens of the County of Culpeper."

The temptation to include the spectators, whether few or many, presents a strong fascination to the Virginia lawyer, as a rule so fluent of speech and conscious of the appreciation with which oratorical efforts are received by the populace.

It was in a legal argument before Chief Justice Marshall on the elements requisite to constitute treason under the Federal Constitution, that Mr. Wirt indulged in his famous eulogy on Blennerhassett and his Island. History fails to record any admonition from the Court to the distinguished Attorney-General that his remarks were not pertinent to the question at issue. Another leader of the Richmond Bar, however, did not fare so well, in addressing the Supreme Court of Virginia, when that sturdy old Jurist, Judge Moncure, was its President. Said that learned counsel, in opening his argument: "My client, Spiro Zetelle, is a native of one of those far-famed Ionian Isles, 'where burning Sappho loved and sung.'" He had proceeded thus far when Judge Moncure, with his hand behind his ear and apparently greatly interested, interrupted—"Will the learned counsel kindly repeat that proposition? I did not catch its import."

The late Judge Hugh L. Bond, of the United States Circuit Court, once told me of an experience, while presiding at the trial of a suit in North Carolina, where the only question at issue was the genuineness of the defendant's signature to the paper sued on. The counsel for the defendant, whom I will call Colonel

Sharpshooter, thus opened his argument before the jury: "My client, Gentlemen of the Jury, was one of those dauntless spirits, who when the tocsin of war sounded through this land, drew his stainless sword at Big Bethel and never sheathed it until the fateful day at Appomattox." At this point Judge Bond with great solemnity interrupted the counsel—"The Court feels compelled to admonish counsel that his eloquent remarks are not germane to the issue. There is no evidence before the jury that his client was at Big Bethel or at Appomattox. Nor is there any evidence that he had a sword, stainless or otherwise, or ever drew it, or ever sheathed it. Had such evidence been offered, the Court would have been constrained to exclude it as irrelevant."

Soon after my removal to Richmond I was appointed counsel for the Richmond & Danville Railroad Company, and all suits instituted against the Company in some fifteen counties, cities and towns were committed to my charge. I thus had renewed opportunities as a country practitioner, besides being introduced to many novel experiences as the counsel for a railroad company.

It will always remain a source of interest to me why the ordinary mortal, in his relations with railroad com-

---

panies, seems to present a phase of character and method of dealing not exhibited under any of the other conditions of life. The character of claims presented, the terms employed in correspondence and Court papers, the testimony of witnesses, and above all the speeches of lawyers for the claimants, are as a rule unique and often full of humor. From an abundant store of incidents I note a few as illustrating these facts.

*(Copy of letter from a lady, owner of cattle killed by railroad train.)*

SKINQUARTER, VIRGINIA, Sept. 11, 189—.

SIR: I have heretofore several times notified the agents of your Company of the fact that three of my best milch cows were killed by one of your trains in July last. We have had much letter-writing back and forth, and the railroad man has been here several times to see me. He says that my claim of \$50 a head for my cows is too much. How he can say that, I do not know. He had never seen them until they were dead, and had no knowledge of the amount which I could make from them by the sale of milk and butter. Lately they have not been

giving as much milk because the season has been dry, but with a good season or a little feeding they would do as well as any cows I had. He also told me that by your direction he had examined the Records at the Court-house, and found that I had lately valued these cows for taxation at \$20 a head. You will permit me to say, however, that the value of my cows when given in for taxation is an entirely different thing from their value when killed by that murderous engine. My cows are dead, and unless I am promptly paid their just value, namely, \$50 apiece, I shall carry my case to law, and not only demand their full value, but damages for their unlawful killing.

Write by return mail, Yours truly,

*(Copy of letter from the owner of hog killed by railroad train.)*

ROARING FALLS, July 23, 189—.

DEAR SIR: On the 11th of February, 189—, the southbound passenger train killed a hog belonging to me. He was something over two years old, and though I have probably seen hogs with finer pedigrees, I have not seen a finer hog. It was about four o'clock Saturday evening. The hog died sometime Sunday night. The Section Master esti-



mated his weight at 225 pounds. No one else put him at less than 250 pounds. It turned out by actual weighing that the Section Master was right. He was poor, as he did not come up more than once a week for something to eat. Everybody was glad to have him go where he pleased, and a few barrels of corn would have made him weigh from 400 to 500 pounds.

The Section Master and myself agreed on \$20 for him, which was less than the price of the meat. That was Monday. The following Wednesday he called on me and said to me that the Supervisor had instructed him to say to me that he considered the charge excessive, and would pay no attention to it; also asked him what had become of the hog.

One of my tenants had skinned the hog to make soap. He got the hog, with the exception of some small pieces, boxed it and notified the Supervisor that it was in the depot subject to his order. The Supervisor ordered him to sell it, which he did the following Saturday. I gave the Supervisor a piece of my mind, plain and explicit. I appealed to Mr. B., and also wrote to Mr. R., referring him to all and every man in Roaring Falls and for miles around as to the value of the hog. He replied that he had referred my letter and the account to the Supervisor, and the latter to the auditor. Shortly afterward I received a letter with your name

signed, saying that if I had made a reasonable claim it would have been settled—I quote from memory—but upon further examination it had been found that the Railroad Company was not responsible. I replied that if you could kill a man's hog, carry him off, sell him and pocket the proceeds without being responsible, you had reached the summit of railroad financiering. By that I meant, of course, the Railroad Company instead of you. I then sued the Company for \$25. I only summoned three witnesses, when I might have summoned thirty. They testified that the hog was not only worth \$25 yearly to me, but was worth \$25 yearly to the neighbors. I got judgment for that amount, and it was appealed to the County Court. Mr. W., your attorney, after inquiring into the facts and getting the Supervisor's admission that he had no defense, came to me for a compromise. I told him that all I cared for was to convince the R. R. Co. that I was right, but if I had to deal with the Supervisor a fight between the Company and myself was unavoidable. He said I was right, and we compromised on \$20, the original amount. I see Mr. W. once every three or four months, and he shoulders all the blame for my not being paid, like the gentleman he is. Says it is all his fault. Therefore all I want to know is whether the compromise stands or is off, or, in other words, whether it is

peace or war. I am satisfied that a man might get justice from corporations if he could strike the right man, but to take their employees as they come he will be broke before he finds him, and it will be worth more than \$20 to me if I can consider them lawful prey with a clear conscience. This is wearisome, but I do not see how I could give you all the facts more explicitly. Yours respectfully,

A traveler's horse had been frightened by the alleged negligence of the railroad company in permitting steam to escape from one of its engines left in close proximity to the highway. As a result a runaway ensued, in which the traveler received serious injuries. This simple statement embodied the essential facts of the claim preferred for damages. From a long declaration of innumerable counts I select the following as a specimen of the terms employed in setting out for the information of the Court the plaintiff's claim against the railroad company.

*State of Virginia,* } To wit: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT  
*City of —.* } FOR THE CITY OF C—.

Jacob Jones, plaintiff, complains of the Richmond and Danville Railroad Company, defendant,

who has been duly summoned, etc., of a plea that the defendant render to the plaintiff the sum of \$10,000 for this, to wit:

That heretofore, to wit: on the 23rd day of May, 1892, the said plaintiff was lawfully possessed of a certain buggy, to wit: a double-seated spring buggy of great value, and of a horse thereto hitched and drawing the same, and in which the said plaintiff was then riding and passing in and along a certain public highway, in the City of C—, known as the Old Carolina Road. And the said defendant was then possessed of a certain railroad, to wit: a railroad with main track and switch tracks, and side tracks, running in the City of C—, partly along and partly across certain highways set apart and dedicated and used as a public highway for public travel, and especially of a certain track upon and across a certain highway in the said City known as the Old Carolina Road, to wit: the public crossing at or nearest to Abram Barley's store; and of a certain engine or locomotive, moved and propelled by steam, then standing and remaining stationary on one of the tracks of the said defendant within the roundhouse yard, of the said defendant and within a few feet, to wit: ten feet of the said public crossing: which said engine or locomotive was then under the control and management of the said defendant, its officers, servants and

employees. Nevertheless, the said defendant, its officers, servants and employees, so carelessly, negligently and improperly behaved and conducted itself in and about the management and control and direction of the said engine or locomotive, that the same by and through the default, carelessness, gross negligence, wilful and wanton recklessness, and improper conduct of the said defendant by its officers, servants and employees, then and there with great force and violence, and with loud and hideous report and noise, was discharged of large volumes of steam, within a few feet, to wit: twenty feet of the said plaintiff; then, to wit: on the 23rd day of May, 1892, riding and passing as aforesaid, in and along the said public highway, in front of the said engine or locomotive, by means whereof the said horse became greatly frightened and uncontrollable and ran and drew said buggy over the said rough crossing, and over the banks and gullies along said highway, near said crossing, and threw said plaintiff with great force and violence from, off and out of said buggy, upon the ground, and by means of the premises aforesaid, the said plaintiff was greatly bruised, hurt and wounded, his left arm broken, his head dangerously split, cut, crushed and became and was sick, sore, lame and disordered, and so continued for a long space of time, to wit: hitherto, during all

of which time the said plaintiff suffered great bodily and mental pain, and was hindered and prevented from performing and transacting his lawful affairs, and business, and also by reason of the premises has become obliged to pay and expend divers sums of money, in the whole amounting to a large sum, in and about the employment of nurses, medicines, simple and nourishing food, and in and about the endeavoring to get healed and cured of the said wounds, hurt, sickness, broken limb, and disorder, and great bodily suffering and mental anguish, he has sustained damages and is entitled to recover of the defendant company, \$10,000.

Many examples of unique testimony of witnesses might be given. In almost every case counsel for the plaintiff would make strenuous efforts to show the high rate of speed at which the train was traveling at the time of the accident. These efforts were always seconded in the most sympathetic spirit by the witnesses, who exhausted their store of illustrations in portraying its velocity.

Thus an old farmer, in response to the usual question, affirmed: "She was running like a wild horse—she was running so fast that I thought she was running away."

More figurative was the assertion of a witness who said: "She was going like light—just like a bird through the air."

But an old negro probably exceeded in dramatic force all these descriptions by his declaration: "De train was gwine dat fast dat it took two to see her; one to say, 'Here she comes,' t'other to say, 'Dar she go'!"

The idiosyncrasies of negro witnesses were sometimes illustrated in other ways than by the mere picturesque phraseology of their testimony.

Thus upon one occasion, when a railroad company had been sued for injuries sustained by a traveler upon the highway while attempting at night to cross its track, the old colored watchman was placed upon the stand to establish the fact that he was diligently guarding the crossing, and had signaled with his lantern the approaching traveler to warn him of the danger of the on-coming train.

This witness gave his evidence with so much apparent fairness, and yet with such great decision, that after his retirement from the stand he was complimented by the counsel for the company upon his deportment while testifying. Turning to the counsel a most serious countenance, the old man said: "Yes, Marse John, I

did de best I could, and I was tellin' de Gawd's truth when I said I waved dat lantern at dat man; but I tell you I got monstrous skeered when dat lawyer kep' axing me 'bout dat lantern and how often I waved it, 'cause I was feered dat he was guine to ax me if dat lantern was lit."

The distinguishing characteristic of this witness found its exact counterpart in another case where a negro employee had testified most volubly for the company. On cross-examination the lawyer for the plaintiff effectually destroyed the force of his evidence by the simple question, "You were sworn to tell the *whole truth* in this case, and I want to know whether you have as a fact given us the *whole truth*?" To which the witness replied, "Yes, sir, and a leetle de rise dereof."

The testimony of learned experts was no less remarkable. Thus my friend Major Charles M. Blackford, who filled the position of counsel for several railroad companies, in a recent address, gives the following as a verbatim quotation from the evidence of a medical expert. In this case the plaintiff's face had been injured by coming in contact with the side of a bridge. The learned expert, for the enlightenment of the jury, made the following luminous explanation of the injury:



---

“The injury was caused by a blow from a blunt substance by which the tissue elements were rent asunder and there was a manifest external breach of tissue. The integument and the following muscles were involved, and the integument over the malar region was ecchymosed, contused and lacerated. The muscles zygomatic major and minor, levator labii superioris alæque nasi, and some other smaller ones were torn from their insertions and their integrity destroyed.”

Sometimes witnesses recounted incidents at once stirring and pathetic.

Hanks Shelton, a splendid young engineer, had lost his life by falling between the moving cars of a freight train while walking at night over its top from the caboose to his engine. Suit was instituted against the railroad company, and as there was quite a dearth of evidence showing the company's liability, recourse was had to the familiar custom of introducing witnesses to testify to the great sufferings of the deceased, his good character and the dependency of his kindred left behind.

The village doctor was called as a witness on the first point, and in response to questions from the plaintiff's

counsel declared that the injuries were necessarily fatal, and that Shelton had lingered in great agony from midnight to dawn when he died.

The counsel for the railroad company opened the cross-examination with the question: "Why did you permit Shelton thus to suffer—why was no opiate administered?"

Like the unfortunate Mr. Phunky, whose untimely question wrought such havoc to his client's cause in the ever-memorable trial of *Bardell v. Pickwick*, we realized in a moment that the question ought not to have been asked, but too late to retract it.

I will not attempt to give the Doctor's reply in his own words, but a free rendition of what he said was about as follows:

"I was called to see Shelton soon after midnight. I found him lying upon a bench in the station at Fox Trap. His injuries were of such a character as not to permit his removal, so I made him as comfortable as I could by propping him up on a bundle of grain bags. A moment's examination convinced me that his injuries were fatal—indeed, I was convinced that the end could not be far off. I was preparing to administer some sedative, when Shelton drew my head down to him and

said, ‘ Doctor, how long can I live? ’ I replied, ‘ Oh, I hope for a long, long time.’ ‘ No,’ he said; ‘ I know I am bound to die. I am not afraid of that; I have been preparing for that for many years. But I have a sweetheart, who lives down the road, and if I can keep alive until morning she could come up on the early train.’ I replied,” said the Doctor, “ that there was a chance of keeping him alive that long provided he could stand the pain, which would be greatly increased by the stimulants which I would have to administer. His face lit up with new life, and calling the depot agent to his side he dictated the telegram to the young lady. All during the night I sat by his side, and whenever I noticed any sign of collapse or disposition to sink into unconsciousness, I would administer stimulants—generally whisky and quinine. Their effect was to stimulate Shelton and to bring on paroxysms of pain. He bore his sufferings with great heroism, and seemed only fearful that he would sink into unconsciousness before the time for the arrival of the up-train. It was a lonely vigil which I kept, the silence only broken by the clickings of the telegraph instrument, the ticking of the station clock, the hoarse breathing of the dying man and his occasional inquiries as to the time and his con-

dition. Toward the morning he revived slightly, and I could see that he was making a great effort to keep his faculties in hand. He made frequent requests for stimulants, though it was evident they rendered more terrible his physical sufferings. As the first rays of the sun streamed in through the window of the little room he murmured, 'Thank God. She cannot be far away.' A moment later he said, 'What is the exact time, Doctor?' 'Six forty-three,' I replied. 'The train is due at 6.49,' he murmured. The words were scarcely uttered when in the distance we both recognized the faint rumblings of the on-coming train. Nearer and nearer it came. At length the signal for the station sounded; then the creaking and clanging of the brakes, and finally the great locomotive stopped puffing and panting after its long race with death.

"At that moment," continued the Doctor, "Shelton seemed animated with new life; his face took on an expression of intense resolution, and with a great effort he raised himself to a sitting posture, and fixed his eyes upon the door. In profound silence we waited—every moment fraught with peril, for the sands of his life were now running very low. Then to my great relief a light footfall was heard on the plank walk; the

door opened; a young woman, with pain-stricken face, entered, and with a murmured exclamation rushed to Shelton's side. He had only strength to fold his arms about her for a moment and hold her close to his breast.

"Soon afterward," added the Doctor with a sigh, "I laid him back upon the bench."

The Doctor said no more, but the crowd which had listened so attentively to his narrative knew that Hanks Shelton's last run was made, and he had stalled his engine in the Roundhouse on the other side of the Great Divide.

From many amusing reminiscences of speeches delivered in railroad damage suits I record the following extracts:

The plaintiff's arm had been injured while aboard defendant's train, by coming in contact with the side of a bridge. The claim was advanced that the bridge was so narrow and the track so rough that his arm was thrown out through the window, etc. The defendant insisted that the plaintiff had carelessly put his arm out of the window and hence the accident.

This was the issue. One of the attorneys for the

plaintiff was very active in proving that the size of the bridge had never been changed since its first erection, though the width of the cars had been greatly enlarged. He also developed the fact that at some time in the past two tramps had been killed by one of the defendant's trains in or near this bridge, and had been buried not far from that structure on the company's right-of-way.

What the purpose of counsel was in pursuing this line of examination, developed when he came to address the jury. His allusion to these circumstances was about as follows:

“We have shown you, Gentlemen of the Jury, by the evidence of witnesses whose high integrity even this defendant had not the temerity to assail, that years and years ago this bridge across Frying-pan Creek was erected; that since that time the engines and cars in use by this defendant have steadily grown in width and weight, and that no corresponding enlargement of the size of this bridge has been made, but it has stood, and still stands—too small by far for the uses for which it was originally constructed—a menace to man and an affront to the Deity. Larger and larger have grown the width of their cars until I feel warranted in saying

that every train which leaves the City of Richmond bound for Danville has to be greased from cow-catcher to back platform in order to squeeze it through that miserable bridge. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, the evidence further demonstrates that the defendant not only maintains this man-trap, in flagrant violation of every obligation to its passengers and our people, but it has added insult to injury by establishing on its right-of-way, near the mouth of this open sepulcher, a graveyard. Yes, I repeat, a private graveyard; so that with the least trouble to itself it can bury the mangled forms of its victims. How many of our people have been thus done to death we shall never know until the Judgment. We do know, however, by the evidence which this plaintiff has adduced in this case, that at least two unfortunates have been killed and buried. That the plaintiff himself did not share a like fate I must ascribe to a merciful interposition of Providence, rather than to any solicitude for his safety on the part of this defendant, its officers and employees. And this reflection leads me, Gentlemen of the Jury, to inquire who is the directing spirit—who the master hand that manages the affairs of this great corporation? The time was when men to the manor born—bone of our bone and

flesh of our flesh—were the officers of the Richmond & Danville Railroad. Into their sympathetic ears our people were accustomed to pour their complaints, which always received the kindest consideration. But those days have, unfortunately for you and me, long since passed. A new type of men now control the affairs of this railroad company. Who are they? I repeat, Where is the home and what the name of the master spirit? Way up yonder somewhere in the frigid regions of the North he lives. What is his name? I am frank to say I never saw the man. I venture to say that not a member of this intelligent jury ever saw the man. I go further and affirm that his Honor—the learned Judge of this Court—never saw the man. But though we have never seen him, the evidence in this case convinces me that he is one of your white-livered, unfeeling specimens, so cold-blooded that were you to cut him open on the fifteenth of July you would find icicles hanging from his heart as long as my walking cane.”

A little negro girl had been struck by a train on which the general officers of the company were inspecting one of its branch roads. The injury was not seri-



ous, as the train had been almost brought to a standstill at the time of the accident. The claim was asserted that the engineer could have stopped the train sooner by a more careful outlook and a more vigorous use of the emergency brakes, etc.

One of the counsel for the plaintiff brought out from the engineer that he had taken his dinner on the day of the accident with the General Manager in the latter's private car; that soon after dinner the train passed Smithville and the engineer had not noticed a small mountain just outside that village. In his speech before the jury this attorney thus referred to these facts:

“The explanation of this deplorable accident, Gentlemen of the Jury, is to be found in the evidence which I wrung from the reluctant lips of Woolwine, the engineer of that train. You heard him make the significant admission that on the day of this accident he ate his dinner with the General Manager. It was indeed a glorious day for old Woolwine. Not for him the food and drink which ordinary mortals in this land are glad to get, but there amid the luxurious surroundings of the General Manager's private car he dined upon such viands and wines as the people of this section never see. The products of every clime were laid under tribute to

furnish forth that feast. Fish from the seas, mutton from the plains, fruits from the tropics, and ices from the frigid zone, gladdened the eye and tickled the palate of Woolwine. But above and beyond these choice viands were the wines, whiskies and cordials whose aroma and flavor pass man's understanding. Old Madeira with the cobwebs of ages wreathing its brow, Scotch and Bourbon whiskies mellow with years, and Apple Jack fragrant beyond the breath of flowers. When old Woolwine mounted his engine, mystified by the effulgence which streamed from the person of the General Manager, and befuddled by the numerous potations which he had imbibed, he was ready to be translated. Pulling open the throttle he said, 'Let her go! The earth is ours and the fullness thereof!' He did not see the mountain just outside of Smithville! Of course he did not. He had dined with the General Manager and was now hauling that potentate in his palace car. He did not see the little girl, the plaintiff in this case! Of course not. He had no eyes for the humble things of earth. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, had he seen her, playing in simple innocence upon the track, unmindful of her danger, do you believe he would have applied at once the emergency brake and with a great jerk and

impact brought the train to a standstill? No. Back yonder in the silken recesses of his palace car was the General Manager taking his afternoon nap, or perhaps regaling himself with his Havana cigar, and with Woolwine the great consideration was the comfort of the General Manager. And so when he saw the plaintiff before him on the track (if indeed he was in a condition to see her at all), he said, ‘No emergency brake for me! Rather than rudely disturb the General Manager, or knock the ashes from his Havana cigar, I will kill every nigger in Mecklenburg!’ ”

As showing that this style of oratory was not the peculiar possession of attorneys appearing against railroads, I will give one more example, along with the reply made by the counsel for the company.

Matthew Motley, an old colored man, had been killed at night by a freight train. The afternoon of his death he had received his week’s pay and had, it was supposed, invested too much of his earnings in whisky, and hence his predicament—asleep on the railroad track at the time of his death. He left a widow and four small children. Suit was instituted, claiming negligence on the part of the engineer in not sooner dis-

covering Motley upon the track and avoiding the accident by stopping his train.

One of the counsel for the plaintiff made a most fervid and extended argument before the jury, portions of which I will endeavor to recall:

“Let me pause, Gentlemen of the Jury, at the outset of our consideration, to note the parties to this litigation. On the one hand we have the widow and infant children of our former county-man, the lamented Matthew Motley. They come before the Court in their habiliments of mourning, spent with the loss of tears, and yet strong in the consciousness of the rectitude of their cause. Like many of our people they are poor, and like others, not a few, they are humble.

“Yet, as I look into the honest faces of this intelligent jury, I am persuaded that neither their poverty nor the humble walks of life from which they come, will deprive them and their cause of that consideration which they so richly merit. They have not the adventitious aids of unlimited wealth and powerful friends, but they stand before you—this weeping widow and these wailing orphans—a perfect type of humility linked with right. I thank God that in this old land of ours we still have tribunals where the weak and poor

are not debarred their rights, but that jurors are quick to recognize and vindicate their cause.

“Who is the other party to this contest? The Richmond & Danville Railroad Company, a great corporation whose plethoric treasury commands the ablest counsel in the land and whose appliances of transportation and communication—strong as steam and swift as light—enable it to marshal at a moment’s notice, from the uttermost parts of the earth, clouds of witnesses to maintain their contentions. Chartered by the general assembly of our State to construct a railroad from Richmond to Danville, it has, through its greed for gain, rested not until it has permeated with its lines every part of this country. Its Briarian arms stretch out to clasp the commerce of the continent, while its manifold and malign influences are felt in every avenue of endeavor and every seat of power. With one arm it touches the great City of Washington where, in the corridors of the Capitol, it is holding conferences with Senators and Congressmen—plotting against the rights and liberties of the people of this land. With another arm it seeks the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico, while with still another it reaches out to the golden sands of the Pacific. With the influences which shape

public opinion, with the men who make our laws, with the jurists who control the Courts, the owners of this veritable Frankenstein are all-potential. I take heart, however, when I recall that despite its power in some forums, the Honorable Judge who presides over this Court is impervious to its smiles and regardless of its frowns.

“These, Gentlemen of the Jury, are the parties to this contest. As I have said, you have on one hand the victims of this defendant’s arrogance and power, weakened it is true by the very act of which they complain, for the head of their house—the husband of this widow and the father of these orphans—has been laid low in death. The author of this cruel wrong stands before you and seeks through its ill-gotten gains and power to escape the penalty which it so justly deserves. It is, comparatively speaking, an unequal contest, but I advance to the conflict without fear as to the result, for this intelligent jury shall declare the judgment and a just God will defend the right.

“I have thought, Gentlemen of the Jury, that as Matthew Motley on the evening of that fatal day set out along this railroad track for his humble home, that some reflections of the prestige and power of this de-

fendant may have passed through his mind, and yet I am sure that with it came the cheering thought that no matter how high it might pile its wealth or how arrogant it might be in closing the avenues of human endeavor, there were still left, even to the humblest citizen, comforts and joys far beyond its power to make or mar. And as he drew nearer and nearer the humble cottage where was centered so much that was dear to him, he doubtless felt great thankfulness that there, close at hand, secure to him, were the joys of wife, and home and little ones. Stronger and stronger arose this beautiful vision as through the darkening twilight gleamed the lights from his humble home. Then I doubt not upon his memory there broke the beautiful lines of John Howard Payne:

“ ‘Mid pleasures and palaces where'er we may  
    roam,  
Be it ever so humble, there 's no place like home.’

“ And as he drew still nearer to his roof-tree, where wife and little ones were eager to greet him, he heard the welcome bark of his faithful watch-dog, and there came to his mind the well-remembered words of the great Byron:

“ ‘ ’T is sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark,  
Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near  
home.’

“ But this beautiful vision and all these joys so near at hand were destined to vanish ‘like the snowfall in the river,’ and even while he contemplated the sweetness and blessedness of home and wife and little ones, this defendant with its cruel engine swept down upon him, and in a moment light was turned to darkness, joy to sorrow, and life to death.

“ What is the plea that the author of this cruel wrong makes before this jury? It is really, my countrymen, an appeal for mercy. Why should mercy be extended it? Has its conduct in the past been marked by that divine attribute? What was its conduct with respect to this humble citizen, whose death we so deplore to-day? What has been its treatment of the heavy-burdened farmers of this country, you and I, Gentlemen of the Jury, in the matter of freight rates and train accommodations? What has been its position with respect to the oppressive legislation forced upon us by plutocrats and goldbugs? In each and every instance its influence and policy has been against the people.



---

Its plethoric treasury bursts with tribute exacted from the people of this and adjoining sections. Its arrogance has been unblushing, and only when brought before an honest jury does it evince signs of sorrow and make promises of reform. In the great crime of 1873, when Silver—the poor man's friend, and the dollar of our father's—was stricken down by an assassin blow, the representatives and managers of this great corporation were aiders and abettors of the crime. To-day alone, and in the presence of this righteous and fearless tribunal, have I heard from the lips of its apologists sentiments of regret and promises to amend. But, Gentlemen of the Jury, we are not to be deceived by such assurances. We know alas! too well, that the defendant is a corporation, an artificial person, if I may so express it, whose promises cannot be enforced and the violation of which entails no penalty. It has no soul to save nor body to burn. Its death-bed repentance, therefore, can avail it nothing. It has but one nerve that is susceptible to feeling, and that is the pocket-nerve. An award of damages will alone teach it to respect the rights of the people of this country. Damages alone will help this weeping widow to provide for these tender orphans, whose natural protector has been

snatched away by the unfeeling act of this defendant. A verdict at your hands, Gentlemen of the Jury, for heavy damages will teach this arrogant corporation that there is a God in Israel; that despite its wealth it is not supreme, and that with a jury of honest men the claims of right and justice will be vindicated.

“Matthew Motley is dead. You cannot bring him back. You cannot stop the tears which bedim the eyes of his weeping widow and wailing orphans, but you can, by a verdict for suitable damages in this cause, make some provision for their temporal wants, curb the negligence and lawlessness of this defendant, protect the people of your county, and above all uphold the law and vindicate the cause of right and justice!”

I had as my associate a gentleman “to the manor-born.” Acquainted with the people of the vicinage, their sympathies, habits of thought and modes of living, he was verily a knight worthy any antagonist before a jury of his county-men. His keen sense of humor was only equaled by the genial spirit which animated his kindly heart. To his gentle memory I offer the homage of my sincerest regards.

Just before counsel for plaintiff concluded his speech, I suggested to my associate that I thought it best that he should make the reply. With a look of growing de-

fiance in his eye, he said, "I will do it, and I will pay him off in his own coin."

From my recollections of his speech I record the following extracts:

"We have just listened, Gentlemen of the Jury, to one of the most remarkable displays of oratory it has ever been my fortune to hear in this ancient Court-house. With a pathos teeming with tears, and a eulogistic eloquence worthy of the loftiest man of all time, the learned counsel has portrayed the virtues and achievements of the 'lamented Matthew Motley.' Who was this honored citizen, whose untimely end, he informs us, we so much deplore to-day? Why, Gentlemen of the Jury, despite the eulogies of counsel, you and I know that he was a drunken 'nigger,' as shiftless and worthless as ever walked the public roads of this county. Old Matt Motley! So good-for-nothing that he could not die a natural death, but it took a railroad train to kill him—he in verity is the individual referred to by the counsel. I am satisfied neither the wife of his bosom nor the officers of the law, who have frequently arrested him for petty offenses, would ever have recognized old Matt in the heroic figure which has been pictured before us.

"From this same reliable source, the imagination of

counsel, we are told that this lamented individual, having collected his weekly wage, was returning home, where amid the caresses of his devoted wife and children he would lavish upon them the comforts which his faithful toil had provided. Now, Gentlemen of the Jury, you and I know, and the evidence in this case confirms our knowledge, that old Matt, as was his custom, had probably spent the larger part of his earnings on the evening in question in mean whisky; and that, filled with decoctions warranted to kill at a distance any ordinary man, he felt like whipping his weight in wildcats, and was staggering homeward, no doubt, to beat his adoring wife with a barrel-stave. She was waiting to greet him, was she? with a warmth of tenderness beyond the poet's dream? Why, as a matter of fact, his arrival at that cabin would strike terror to its inmates, and the news of his departure hurt no hearts, save those conjured up in the brilliant imagination of counsel for plaintiff.

“ But our eloquent friend would have us believe that just before the moment of his death old Matthew was ‘homeward plodding his weary way,’ his heart filled with love and his mind aglow with the sweet verses of that gentle Bard whose ode to ‘Home’ has been loved and

sung in every clime. I do not believe, Gentlemen of the Jury, that that old darkey ever heard of John Howard Payne or his beautiful lines. But suppose we admit that such was the case. Don't you know that instead of repeating those incomparable verses with the beauty and expression with which the accomplished counsel recited them, he mumbled them among his drunken hiccoughs somewhat after the following fashion, as he staggered on over those cross-ties towards his home :

“ ‘Mid pleasures (hic) and palaces (hic)  
Where'er we may r-o-a-m,  
Be it ever so humble (hic),  
There is no (hic) place like h-o-m-é.’

“But, Gentlemen of the Jury, not content with defaming the sacred memory of that blessed poet by putting his beautiful lines into the mouth of this drunken vagabond, this attorney has gone further and affirms that the famous apostrophe of the immortal Byron to the ‘watch-dog’ was also upon his lips ; that as Motley drew near his cabin a noble dog stood forth to bid him lordly welcome. Now, my countrymen, I charge you to remember that there is no evidence in this case that there was any dog there at all ! But suppose it be

conceded that there was a dog. Don't you know that instead of some noble mastiff, such as awoke the poesy of the immortal bard, it was some durn little yallow cur-dog, such as you and I have often seen running around negro cabins making more fuss than a mill-clapper. And so, Gentlemen, when we come down from the realms of fancy into which the gentleman's eloquence has carried us, we find that this is simply a case where a worthless vagabond, having drunken more tangle-foot whisky than he could conveniently carry, staggers out upon a railroad track, and proceeds to take his evening nap with a rail for his pillow and a tie for his bed. Gentlemen, that railroad was not constructed for that purpose. The commerce of the continent (to which counsel refers), the mail facilities of the Federal Government, the legions of passengers bent upon missions of business, pleasure or sorrow, cannot be held in check while Matt Motley and the likes of him appropriate the railroad tracks of this country to sleep off their drunken debauches. Ah, but they say that our engineer should have stopped his train. So say I, if he had seen old Matt, or had known he was there. But how could he see him at the dread hour of midnight, when a pall of inky darkness covered the land, and his

---

train dashing with lightning speed around a curve? It was not in the power of mortal man to see that sleeping form upon the track. It is admitted that he had no reason to suppose that Matt Motley would prefer the stony bed of a railroad track as his place of rest, rather than the gentle home whose joys have been so depicted in your hearing by counsel for plaintiff. The engineer could not see him, because the evidence established that in addition to the darkness Matt had selected the end of a curve in the track as his place of repose. Not since the immortal Samuel Weller described upon the witness-stand the difficulties of discerning with one's ordinary eyes any object around a corner has the claim been advanced that such a feat was feasible, until it was made by counsel here to-day. Before such a jury as this which I have the honor to address, I need scarcely say that this argument may excite your risibles, but can never appeal to your judgment.

“Despairing of grounds to recover by virtue of any strength in his client's cause, the learned counsel seeks to arouse your prejudices by depicting alleged crimes of which this defendant has been guilty. First and foremost he charges that its representatives and friends were at least *particeps criminis* to the great crime of

1873—the demonetization of silver. I indignantly deny the charge! There is no evidence before this jury—yea, there is none that can be adduced to support such an indictment. I stand here to-day—with my valued associate, the representative of this railroad—before this Court. My opinions upon that and upon all other questions of public import, are not unknown to the people of this county. Were I disposed to disregard the proprieties of this occasion and to follow the learned gentleman in his unseemly search for sympathy, I too might proclaim myself an advocate of Free Silver! Yes, silver in easy reach of the humblest citizen of this grand old commonwealth!

“And so, Gentlemen of the Jury, we could follow the counsel in all his migrations from the case, but time will not permit, nor do the interests of my client require. You will allow me, however, to say in closing, that if by any possibility you should so far forget your senses as to return a verdict in this case in favor of this plaintiff, the learned counsel who has addressed you will put one half of it way down in his breeches pocket, and his associate, my learned friend, will put the other half way down in his breeches pocket, and



---

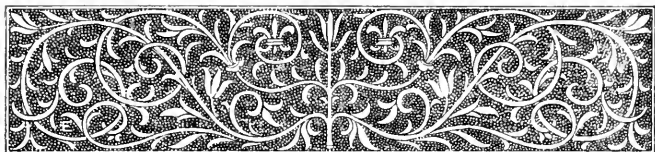
then old man Motley's 'weeping widow' and 'wailing orphans' can go to Hades."

The foregoing examples of speeches made in railway damage suits must not, of course, be considered as typical of those delivered in all such cases. They are simply amusing instances which, because of their uniqueness and humor, I have thought it worth while to record.

Of the Virginia lawyer I have the warmest appreciation. His high estimate of the profession; his pride in the intellectual achievements of his confrères, past and present; the mingled humor and seriousness with which he meets its responsibilities,—all serve to render him a most attractive personality, and to lift his avocation far above the prosaic plane of a mere bread-winning occupation. The changes inseparable from our modern life must leave their impress upon him. The advent of the stenographer, type-writer, telephone and file-case, will contribute to the despatch of business and the more orderly conduct of affairs committed to his charge, but with respect to many weightier matters we may hope that the old order will survive. Thus, he may forbear to write with his own

hand in unintelligible characters his legal documents, and to find a more suitable file-case for his papers than his silk hat or coat pocket; and yet we trust his simplicity and genuineness of character will remain unchanged. More and more he must bear a part in the strictly business life of his day, but let us hope that his idealism will not be destroyed amid this new environment. The magnitude of the financial interests which he guards, and the exacting demands of corporations, may tend to limit his time and specialize his sympathies, yet may he continue to recognize the obligations, literary, political and social, which have heretofore adorned his life and enriched his country. Among the legal digests hot from the press, which crowd his library shelves, we would find as of yore copies of Addison, Macaulay and Horace; and his standards of authority for all the great emergencies of life, whether individual or social, remain the Virginia Bill of Rights, the Federal Constitution, and the Bible.





## CHAPTER VI

### *Some Excursions into Politics*



I CANNOT remember the time when I did not feel an interest in politics. Long before I had any well-defined idea of the principles for which contending parties stood, I was a loyal adherent of my side; and long before I had any clear appreciation of what might follow my Party's success, I was ready and willing to spend and be spent to secure its triumph. Doubtless much of this feeling resulted from the abnormal conditions existing in Virginia at the time my boyish mind first began to realize the existence of political parties and the meaning of the varying rallying cries which held their adherents. With me it was an impression derived from sight rather than hearing. I may not have understood the political questions at issue,

but I could see and appreciate the personnel of the two opposing forces. On the one hand were marshaled my own kith and kin, the men of my own land and lineage; on the other, a great mass of newly manumitted slaves—led by aliens—with here and there some worthy Virginian whose presence among them only served to emphasize the repellent characteristics of his association.

Doubtless my youthful interest even antedated the formation of organized political parties, for during the period immediately following the Civil War there were, strictly speaking, no organized political parties in Virginia. From 1865 to 1870 the whole population—white and black—was disfranchised, and the State governed from Washington as Military District No. 1. When under the provisions of the Federal Legislation, so curiously styled “Reconstruction,” the State was readmitted into the Union, the shibboleths and sentiments which usually divided thoughtful men as Whigs, Democrats or Republicans were subordinated in the supreme desire to save the political, economic and social life of the Commonwealth from the disasters which would follow the rule of ignorance and venality.

In furtherance of this idea, the candidates nomi-

---

nated by the Democratic Party were retired and a new organization effected, composed of Whigs, Democrats, Union men, Secessionists, and Republicans not a few, who nominated as their standard-bearers for the positions of Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, Gilbert C. Walker of Binghamton, New York, who had come to Virginia in the wake of the Federal Army, and John F. Lewis, a Virginian, who both before and during the Civil War had been a staunch Union man. Arrayed against them were Henry H. Wells, also a non-resident of the State, and a negro whose name has escaped my memory.

This organization which nominated Walker and Lewis was called "The Conservative Party," and to its formation and the consequent triumph which followed the movement at the polls Virginia was indebted for her exemption from the humiliations and excesses which afflicted so many of the Southern States.

I have anticipated, however, in time some of the reminiscences and happenings of that period to which I first alluded: to wit, the years between Appomattox and Virginia's readmission into the Union. These were days fruitful of trouble and forebodings to the white people of the State, while the blacks as a rule were

celebrating their recent emancipation and the coming of still greater political powers with a joyous and careless abandon so characteristic of that childlike race. These celebrations, as I remember them, generally took the form of marching processions in which thousands of negroes would participate. As if to provide some semblance of organization, there quickly arose all sorts of Societies, Lodges and Associations. The names of some of these orders are suggestive—"The Rising Sons of Ham," "Workers in the Lord's Vineyard," "Galilean Fishermen" and "Stars of Hope." I have no distinct remembrance of anything these societies ever accomplished, except the celebrations and processions above cited. On these occasions the blowing of fifes, the beating of drums and the marching of dusky columns, marshaled by officers bedecked with flowing sashes of red or blue calico and mounted on old horses of attenuated frames, were the predominating characteristics.

The recurring anniversary of emancipation, or the ratification by the respective States of the various amendments to the Federal Constitution, all furnished occasions for separate celebrations. I recall with amused interest the remark of an aged Virginian, who

in company with a Northern friend was stopped by a negro procession which filled the street over which they desired to pass. With some touch of impatience the latter inquired as to the meaning of the demonstration. "Oh! Another damned amendment to the Constitution, I suppose!" responded the Virginian.

These Lodges and Societies afterward played an important part in the political career of the negroes, for it was there that they were drilled and schooled to play their parts as voters. And here it may be remarked that the world has never produced a voter so unquestioning in his devotion to his Party, or a system which so enabled that vote to be deposited and counted. In grateful recognition of the privilege conferred, and in dread apprehension lest it might be destroyed by the advent to power of a Party inimical to his rights, the negro never missed an election nor ever failed to vote the "ticket as printed." To these influences might be superadded the power of the Church, Lodges and Societies, of which he was invariably a member. A failure to vote the "ticket as printed" would bring upon the delinquent excommunication and ostracism from these much-valued associations. The system in vogue as suggested was most conducive to the plan of securing a

vote from every negro without reference to his capacity to know the names of the candidates or offices to which they aspired. The tickets in use were printed by each Party, and in the case of the negroes were never distributed, but deposited with the leader at each precinct, who held the tickets within a foot of the ballot-box, and no negro was permitted to vote, as far as the influences above mentioned could control, except a ticket presented him by this holder, who watched it with eagle-eye from the moment it left his hand until it was safely deposited in the box. In later years one of the favorite devices of the opposition was to buy the ticket-holder, who would substitute, all unknowing to his dupes, tickets of exact form and appearance, but with the names of the rival candidates printed thereon.

This solidarity among the negroes was not effectually broken until the second election of Mr. Cleveland convinced them that the muniments of their privileges would not be affected by the success or failure of any political Party in Federal elections. The growing determination of the whites to secure the control of the government by one means or another had also the effect of depriving elections of the interest and attraction with which they were once invested to these new-born suffragants.



---

I would not be understood in recording these recollections as thereby evincing unfriendly feeling toward the negroes. On the contrary, my sentiments toward them are and always have been of the kindest character. The history of the world does not present such instances of friendship and devotion as that evinced by this race to the white women and children of the South while the men were absent from home fighting battles, the results of which it was then thought would determine the question of their freedom or bondage. Nor do I think their political conduct during the time referred to is to be wondered at. The greater wonder is, that with the powers placed in their hands, and under the leadership and instigation of the false or deluded friends by whom they were surrounded, they did not proceed to even greater lengths. It would have been a step fraught with infinite danger to have intrusted the responsibilities of government to a race whose only preparation had been centuries of savagery and two hundred years of slavery, even if they alone had been concerned; but when it is recalled that by their enfranchisement they were made the political masters of the white race in every locality where they represented a majority, the difficulties and dangers of the situation are made manifest. Add to all this the

fact that they were called upon to perform the duties of citizenship, and in many instances the rôle of political masters, in a country denuded of its wealth and bereft by war of a large part of its white male population; the still further fact that their relations with their white neighbors had been either the traditional enmity existing between the slaves and the non-slaveholding whites, or that of servant and master; and the full character of the trying and exasperating conditions surrounding the situation will be appreciated.

I will not burden my narrative, however, with any attempt at a full recital of the political conditions and happenings of the times referred to. That they were without parallel in the world's history will be readily appreciated. The political, economic and social disorders which followed, and the eventual restoration to power of the intelligent and property-owning classes of the community, are facts of contemporary history. The white people of the Virginia Peninsula, however, at the time of which I write, could not discern any such propitious future. For many years after they were accorded the right of representative government, they were so outnumbered by the blacks that their Congressman was a "carpet-bagger" named Platt, and their

representatives at Richmond in the Senate and House of Delegates were both negroes.

Despite the great majority which the negroes possessed in that locality the whites were vigilant and active in bringing out their voters at every election. My first political service was in carrying an old gentleman afflicted with rheumatism to a polling-place located many miles from his home. I remember with what pride on my return I proclaimed the fact that every white man registered at the precinct had voted—my decrepit charge enabling the leaders to make that proud boast. As the negroes in that particular precinct outnumbered the whites by a majority of over three to one, the energy of my friends and myself did not avail much.

From this my first experience as a political worker, taken in connection with many forms of service subsequently rendered, I am convinced that no one can feel the warmest sense of loyalty and devotion for his Party who has not sturdily borne his share in the labor necessary to achieve its victories. As the men constituting the athletic teams which represent the several colleges of our land, or who cheer from the bleacheries the fellows who bear their college colors, feel for their Alma Mater a devotion which the mere book-loving student

can never know, so the veteran who has learned to love his Party by fighting its battles in the preliminaries and at the polls, feels a devotion for the organization and a nearness to every man in the ranks which no mere theorist of government can ever realize. If he has suffered the pangs of fatigue, if his face has been burned with explosions from powder in celebrating its victories, or his back drenched with coal-oil as he bore aloft in some parade his torch to swell the number and glories of his Party's legions, all these circumstances will add to the fervor of his interest and to the unction with which he insists that in the distribution of honors in the hour of victory only the veterans from the ranks shall be placed on guard.

Among the earliest indications of my interest in politics I recall the payment of a small portion of my hard-earned savings for the subscription to the weekly edition of the "Richmond Enquirer." I cannot remember why I was induced to subscribe to this particular paper, though it was doubtless the traditions which had come down to me of its influence and power when Thomas Richie was its editor, and of the faithful thousands who found in its columns the inspiration of their political conduct. Probably no more suggestive

incident can be recalled of the influence of this journal and its wide-spread circulation among the country folk of Virginia than that recorded of the worthy parson, who in addressing his hearers with the "Parable of the Prodigal Son" as his text, pictured the circumstance of the returning wanderer as follows:

"Ah, my brethren, what a homelike picture was that which greeted this wayworn traveler from the far country! As he drew near to the scenes of his childhood and stood once more within sight of his dear old home, what was the picture which gladdened his eyes? Why! there upon the front porch sat his old father, smoking his after-dinner pipe, and reading a copy of the 'Richmond Enquirer!'"

I do not know that I garnered any great store of political wisdom from my perusal of the columns of the "Enquirer," but I at least formed some estimate of the position and character of the leading public men then playing their parts in the history of the country. I regarded them with much the same interest that a horseman studies the pedigree and follows the careers of notable racers, and so I learned in time the influences—personal and political—which had brought them to the front, and could cast with some degree of accuracy the

horoscope of their future. The two men in public life who most enlisted my admiration were Thomas F. Bayard of Delaware and Allen G. Thurman of Ohio. I also watched with great interest the careers of Roscoe Conkling, Benjamin H. Hill, James G. Blaine, James A. Garfield, Samuel J. Tilden and L. Q. C. Lamar.

My appreciation of political conditions and the attitude of the two great national parties of the country became better defined with the passing years, and so in 1876 when I bade adieu to my Alma Mater I felt quite qualified to enlighten the public with respect to the issues of the day. At least this was my estimate of the situation. Accordingly in the fall of that year, and in the memorable contest between Tilden and Hendricks and Hayes and Wheeler, I made my first appearance as a political speaker. The place of this deliverance was a small hamlet in the County of Botetourt, and my long-suffering audience was composed of the worthy sons and daughters of the neighborhood. I think I alluded to them in the opening sentences of my speech as "the beauty and chivalry of the grand old County of Botetourt, who, conscious of their country's peril, have come forward impelled by considerations of the highest patriotism to take counsel for its safety." I

---

cannot remember anything that I said except that I rung the changes on "Tilden, Hendricks and Reform," which was the favorite slogan in that campaign. I recall too, that in concluding my remarks I assured the astonished feminine element of my audience that my candidate for the Presidency, Mr. Tilden, was a bachelor, and that when he should have been installed in the White House he would naturally look for some gentle partner to share its glories, and that I was satisfied that nowhere on the habitable globe could he find one of fairer mien than among the winsome maidens of that locality. This deliverance, as I remember, brought me great applause—whether because of the anticipations thus held out or the far-fetched character of the suggestion I never stopped to inquire.

With my admission to the Bar, like all young lawyers, especially in the country districts of Virginia, I was frequently called upon to make speeches upon all sorts of subjects and on every imaginable occasion. To have refused these invitations would have deprived me of the privilege of securing a better acquaintance with the populace, or forced me to confess that there was at least one subject with respect to which I could not speak. Thus I not infrequently, despite my youth and scanty

store of information, delivered addresses at school and college commencements, at the reunion of Confederate veterans, at barbecues, tournaments and the like.

I recall with amused interest my first experience as a tournament orator. Strange as it may seem, I had never attended a tournament in Virginia, though they were of frequent happening throughout the State. My ideas, therefore, of tournaments were gathered from Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," Scott's "Ivanhoe," and the grandiloquent descriptions of those held in Virginia which appeared from time to time in the daily press. When I received an invitation therefore to deliver what was called "The Charge to the Knights," I set about the preparation of my oration with the picture of a scene in my mind such as that which was witnessed at Camelot when the knights of King Arthur's Round Table strove with one another in sight of the beauties of his famous court. Steeped in this spirit, I spent many hours in the preparation of this address, and my horror can be better imagined than described when on the day in question I was presented to deliver my oration amid conditions utterly at variance with my preconceived notions of the scene. Arranged in a semicircle around a wagon, from which



I was expected to speak, was a group of so-called "knights," clad in every manner of costume from a cow-boy's outfit to Derby hat and patent-leather shoes; some with umbrellas and others with poles, the latter of which by a flight of imagination I recognized as the lances on the skill in using which fortune would declare the victor. Round and about this aggregation was a mass of dusty, perspiring humanity, through whose ranks went pushing from time to time peddlers of horse-cakes and persimmon beer, pop-corn and cider.

Despite my surprise, and the rather inappropriate character of my address, I felt on the whole that I emerged from the ordeal with better fortune than that which befell a close friend of mine, now a prominent member of the Richmond Bar, who in the early days of his attorneyship essayed a like effort. The conditions under which he was called upon to speak were almost identical in character with those above described. Unfortunately, however, for my friend, his tournament effort was among the very first of his public deliverances, and so at the sight of the "brave knights" and the on-looking crowd every word of his address threatened to take everlasting flight. It was only by a most superhuman mental effort that he could retain

any recollection of what he had so carefully prepared. To add to his embarrassment, there stood immediately in front of the speaker a stony-eyed auditor, who had evidently imbibed too freely of a beverage that inebriates as well as cheers, and who watched him with an expression of mingled astonishment and stupidity. All these varying and concurring circumstances caused the orator to fall into a most monotonous and dirge-like rendition of his part, and so when after a half-hour of sing-song monologue my friend finally concluded with the halting injunction to the Brave Sir Knights, "To charge—charge for Love and Beauty! and may the Crown of Victory perch upon the lance of him who by his skill and valor best deserves the Prize!" his wail-like remarks were taken up and continued by the wall-eyed auditor aforesaid, who announced in exactly the same tone of voice to the astonished multitude, "The rest of the services will be concluded at the grave!"

In 1881, I for the first time received a nomination for public office, when I was selected by my Party as one of its candidates for election to the legislature of Virginia, to represent the County of Pittsylvania and the city of Danville. It was a time of great political

changes in Virginia, and the prospects of success for my Party, as subsequently demonstrated, were very slim. What was known as the Readjuster Party had just risen into prominence, and was contesting with the old Conservative or Democratic Party for control in every department of the State government. This organization had its origin in a difference of opinion as to the methods to be adopted for settling the State debt of Virginia. The debt was created before the Civil War. The accumulation of interest during a portion of that struggle and during the "reconstruction period," together with the unconstitutional action of the Federal Government in the partition of the State's territory, gave rise to questions of great difficulty as to what was the equitable and proper course for the State to pursue with reference to the bonded liability previously created. Added to these questions was the further fact that under an attempted settlement made immediately after Virginia had been readmitted to the Union, the State had assumed the payment of a portion of the principal at a rate of interest which time had demonstrated was absolutely beyond her financial ability to meet. A minority of the Conservative Party under the leadership of General William Mahone and

John E. Massey, with a corps of lieutenants of remarkable ability, declared that a readjustment of this debt so as to bring it within limits both with respect to the amount of principal and interest, and the equitable obligations of Virginia in the premises, should be made with the consent of the creditors, if obtainable, and if not obtainable, then by force. This element was thus denominated by its friends as "Forceful Readjusters" and by its enemies as "Repudiators." Allied with them was a large portion of the white Republicans and the solid negro vote of the State.

Arrayed against this combination was the great body of the Conservatives or Democrats of the State, who styled themselves "Debt Payers" and were called by their opponents "Funders." This Party recognized the necessity for readjusting the public debt and bringing it within the ability of the State to pay. It, however, insisted that such an adjustment must be made with the consent of the creditors, and that any forceful adjustment was in fact a repudiation of the State's plighted faith, and would bring dishonor upon the hitherto unsullied name of the Commonwealth. The contention of this Party from an ethical standpoint was unquestionably right. Its weakness, however, consisted

in the fact that with the existing rate of taxation the State could not meet the annually accruing liabilities, and that in order to carry out this very commendable contention an increase in the rate of taxation was necessary. This manifestly unpopular step it refused to advocate, upon the ground that in the light of the then impoverished condition of the people it was not to be considered.

In addition to the question above referred to, which had given rise to the formation of the Readjuster Party, there were, of course, other collateral issues which entered the contest. The Debt Payers represented the existing order. Their sympathizers held, and had held for years, all the positions of trust and emolument in the State government. These posts had been filled as a rule from the citizens of the eastern and middle portions of the State, to the seeming exclusion of the great section beyond the Blue Ridge. And thus the contest partook in some degree of one between sections and castes, which added to its acrimony and intensity.

John W. Daniel was the nominee of the Debt Payers for Governor, while William E. Cameron was the candidate of the Readjusters. They were both men of un-

questioned ability, and above all things, to the delight of the ordinary Virginia crowd, they were fluent speakers and could maintain their cause in that most trying ordeal—a man-to-man discussion on a Court-house green.

Into this contest, as above recited, I stepped as one of the nominees of my Party in the largest county of the State for election to the general assembly. I had as my associates upon the ticket a Methodist minister, and a young gentleman who combined the various avocations of farmer, merchant and lawyer. I remember with what assiduity we attempted to conceal the fact that he was actually a member of the Bar. In a community of farmers, it may be well appreciated that a ticket consisting of one preacher and two lawyers did not commend itself to popular favor, especially as our opponents were forever iterating and reiterating the charge that the farmers of the country were being burdened with taxation to pay an iniquitous and unjust debt, while the lawyers, as the paid attorneys of bondholders and syndicates, were forever forging chains to bind more securely these burdens upon their backs.

Arrayed against us was a ticket consisting of a reputable lawyer, a prominent farmer and a colored man.

It is but truth to say that this negro was in many respects the best speaker in the crowd, but I am satisfied that his presence upon the ticket, while it rallied to its support with enthusiastic devotion the whole negro population, drove from it many of the white voters who under other circumstances would have embraced the cause of this new Party.

The Readjuster Party won a complete victory in the State, electing their candidate for Governor, and a majority in both branches of the general assembly. My associates and myself, however, were successful, and I found myself as a result of the election an accredited representative of a confiding people.

I shall always look back upon this canvass with mingled feelings of amusement and pleasure. For over six weeks, mounted on a woebegone steed, in company with my good old Methodist brother, I rode up and down the county, speaking each day. In school-houses, in country stores, in the public roads, wherever people could be gotten together, there we proclaimed our message and exhorted our auditors to organize, register and vote. At night we sometimes accepted the invitation of the leading citizen of the neighborhood, and so enjoyed the comforts of a good bed and well-cooked food. As a rule, however, we turned even the graces of hospitality

to account, and sought the humble cabins whose occupants were supposed to be doubtful in their sympathies, or outspoken in their opposition to our cause. Every weapon in the arsenal of the politician was brought into requisition on these occasions. Arguments, appeals, anecdotes, and overflowing interest in our host, his family, his baby, his crops, his horses,—all were used as occasion required to establish our claims. If our principles and policies were objectionable, then redoubled efforts were put forth to win the allegiance of our host to our personal fortunes. If we found we were *persona non grata* either because of occupation, religious associations, past records, or the like, then stress was laid upon the claims of the Party and the duty of subordinating such considerations in an effort to secure its triumphs at the polls. Sometimes our host would prove obdurate, and sullenly dissent, assailing us with arguments and denials. But these experiences, though well calculated to dampen our ardor, were not so trying as when after a hard day's campaigning we found ourselves at the tender mercy of a host who demonstrated the rightfulness of our cause by rehearsing the speeches which we ourselves had delivered. I am satisfied from many such adventures that there are few forms of tor-



ture more excruciating than to compel a man to listen to his own eloquence; and that no pang might be lacking, we were oftentimes regaled with our own anecdotes and supposed witticisms.

In addition to public addresses and this house-to-house canvass, we neglected not to take advantage of all gatherings, such as basket-picnics, warrant trials, barn-raising and corn-shuckings, and even on Sundays our ubiquitous presence might be noted at "All-day Meetings," where we sought to establish ourselves with the elect by the flattering attention with which we regarded the sermon, and the unction with which we sang; nor did we fail to court the good graces of the kindly housewives by devouring with many signs of appreciation the dinners which they always provided for such occasions.

The subject of our public addresses, consisting in large part the inviolability of contracts, the rights of the bondholders, etc., was not one to enthuse an audience, a large portion of which affected to believe that these selfsame bondholders had in some mysterious way brought on the Civil War, robbed our people, partitioned the State, and were now, Shylock-like, clamoring for the pound of flesh; and so I had recourse to the

expediency so often common among old-time Virginia stump-speakers, of interlarding my speeches with anecdotes. Of their effectiveness, or at least the relish with which they were received, I was not infrequently reminded. Often in the midst of a learned argument, designed to fix the legal status of the Coupons, a voice in the crowd would call out, "Oh, damn the Coupons! Tell us that Bear tale." No matter how ancient the anecdote, if it was to the point and told with animation, it seldom failed to strike a responsive chord; and men's hearts, if not their minds, would be moved in sympathy with the speaker and his cause.

At length, the canvass over, rewarded as I have said by victory for our local ticket, we transferred the scenes of our labor from the highways of Pittsylvania to the old Capitol building at Richmond. Here I found our Party confronted by adverse majorities in both branches of the general assembly, and the hope of defeating the schemes which our opponents had in hand seemed most forlorn. However, our membership was homogeneous, united and capable of self-leadership, while the opposition was heterogeneous and depended upon a dictator or leader, not of the body, for their guidance. As is well known, this leader was General

William Mahone, and he ruled with an arrogance which brooked no interference, and under his own hat essayed to carry the mind which should alone determine the policy of his Party. To this circumstance, together with the character of the coalitionists which made up the Party, and the incessant warfare which we waged upon their citadel, is to be attributed its final fall.

Among the membership of our House were fifteen colored delegates. They took little part in the deliberations of the body except to vote. This duty they performed, however, with unfailing regularity, and their votes were recorded in favor of all party measures so loyally as to win for them at the hands of General Mahone the appellation of "faithful allies." It was a circumstance to be noted that in the succeeding legislature, in which their party was in the minority, they more frequently participated in the debates, or at least made speeches more or less to the point. Many of these efforts displayed the negro's well-known love of humor, and sometimes there was a touch of pathos and homely wisdom. On one occasion the name of the late Frank D. Irving, one of the most lovable men and accomplished lawyers in Virginia, was presented as a candidate for judge, when in support of his election a

colored member, a boyhood friend of the distinguished lawyer, spoke about as follows:

“Mr. Speaker: I rise to second de nomination of Mr. Irvings. Mr. Speaker, I knows Mr. Irvings. I knowed him befo’ de war; I knowed him in an’ enduring of de war, and I knowed him since de war; and I knows him to be a man whar courts no man’s smiles, nor fears no man’s frowns. He will make a jest judge. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Irvings is a God-fearing man, and if we all were half as good, we could nigh ’bout smell de blossoms that bloom on de trees in de fields of Paradise.”

I will not burden my narrative with any description of the various measures with which our opponents sought to strengthen their power. I will, however, allude to the means which we adopted to defeat their enactment. Briefly stated, this was simply a policy of obstruction. We had no assurance that by delay we could prevent their ultimate passage, but we felt that the future might have better things in store, and that in any event our course would rivet the attention of the people and perhaps stimulate them with some of the spirit which animated our hearts. We were well equipped for this kind of warfare. Among our membership were men thoroughly skilled in all the intri-

cacies of parliamentary rules. Besides, we had debaters of unquestioned ability, and speakers not a few who, without reference to their mental attainments, possessed a lung power which was most efficacious for delay when logic and eloquence had been expended in vain. The rules of the House—those usually in vogue in parliamentary bodies, and which had been adopted by our opponents before our policy was indicated—proved a veritable Frankenstein to the majority. Indeed, under our interpretation and attempted enforcement, they resembled the concept of the Constitution of the United States which Baldwin puts into the minds of the two old Virginians referred to in his “Flush Times in Alabama.” These two worthies, exiled from their beloved Commonwealth, were wont to beguile the tedious hours by discussing the provisions of that much-discussed instrument, invariably concluding with the conviction that it had been divinely ordained as the means for preventing the national government from doing anything.

With the help of the rules and free use of the right to speak on every conceivable subject, to require the reading in full of each day’s journal, to interpose motions to adjourn at every opportunity and demand recorded roll-calls upon all measures and motions, we

finally came to the end of the regular session with nearly all the obnoxious measures referred to still unenacted. A call for an extra session by the Governor quickly followed, but the spirit of revolt and disintegration in the ranks of the majority had now asserted itself. Smarting under the domination of their leader and would-be dictator, Senator Newberry with the ringing call, "This way, freemen!" bolted the caucus of his Party, followed by a sufficient number of his associates to turn the majority in the Senate. Thus, not only were the measures of the dominant party defeated, but the knell of its final fall was sounded.

The experiment of a minority of the whites allying themselves with the solid vote of the blacks, had been tried and for the nonce had been successful. The startling declaration of one of their leaders, that unlike Scipio they would not carry the war into Africa, but would carry Africa into the war, had been essayed, and victory had crowned the portentous experiment. Now another appeal was to be made to the people, and the legitimacy of this alliance and its right to rule was to be more decisively determined.

The campaign in the fall of 1883, in which I was again one of the nominees of my Party for election to

---

the House of Delegates, was one of the most exciting ever witnessed in Virginia. Only members of the general assembly were to be elected, but it was everywhere felt that upon the result of the election depended the supremacy for long years in the old Commonwealth of one or the other of the two parties which confronted each other in the contest. The Readjusters had the advantage of the power and patronage of the State administration and of the government at Washington, but the coalition referred to was growing more and more obnoxious, and by its very composition its defeat was foredoomed.

After the canvass, in which both parties put forth great efforts, the Democrats elected majorities in both branches of the general assembly, myself and my associates in Pittsylvania being among those who won at the polls.

Two circumstances connected with this canvass might be recorded: the culmination and decline in Virginia of the custom of dueling, and the occurrence of the so-called "Danville Riot." Of dueling and its hold upon the sympathies of the people in almost every land, I need not speak. In Virginia, for years it had been an accepted form of settling personal differences,

and men repaired to the field of honor as if to some court established by divine decree. The high courtesy of the participants, the one to the other; the light esteem in which men held their lives as compared with their much-coveted reputation for valor and honor,—all served to invest the practice with a certain flavor of heroism and romance. Despite most stringent statutes the custom flourished, and probably never in one year of grace were there so many affairs of honor as during the canvass referred to. One prominent leader found himself embarrassed with two such engagements on the same day, and had to hurry from one encounter to keep his appointment at the other. The public sentiment, however, which had sustained the practice now showed unmistakable signs of change. The happenings of this canvass undoubtedly rendered the custom less and less popular, and so its decline continued until now it has fallen into a state of “innocuous desuetude.”

The Danville Riot above referred to, and which attracted wide-spread attention at the time, was nothing more nor less than a street fight between whites and blacks, the immediate occasion for which was an inconsiderate jostling of a white man by a colored man, or vice versa, on the sidewalk. Of course, back of this



was the irritating fact that the negroes, and a few white allies, had political control of the City government, and so amid the excitement incident to the pending campaign the collision came.

As we have said, the Readjuster Party was defeated in the election. The most important fact incident to this result was the demonstration that no political party in Virginia could hold permanent power which depended for its supremacy in large measure upon the solid negro vote. Africa had indeed been led into the war. The leaders were among the ablest Virginians of their time, and temporary success had crowned the movement; but two years of this coalition rule was sufficient to so arouse and so solidify the white vote of the State, that at the next election the result was reversed and the experiment repudiated. The twenty years which have followed but serve to confirm the fact thus established. We may await with interest and apprehension the next experiment with the negro vote, which will certainly come whenever the white vote of the State divides.

My experience in the general assembly of 1883-84 was just the reverse of that in the former body. Then I was in the minority. Now my Party held the reins

of power. That we were not as considerate of the rights of our opponents as cooler heads might enjoin, may be acknowledged. We felt that existing conditions were the result of a revolutionary movement, and that like methods were justifiable in restoring the conduct of affairs to our own keeping. I was very active; and planning and scheming, working and achieving for my Party, was a service in which I found the liveliest interest.

At the State Convention held in the summer of 1884 I was nominated as one of the Presidential Electors on the Cleveland and Hendricks ticket. I will not attempt to record my experiences in this campaign. It was a time of intense enthusiasm among the members of both of the two great parties. All the signs of the times indicated that the old historic Democratic Party, which notwithstanding its numbers had been excluded from power in the national government since 1861, was about once more to elect a President. Such proved to be the fact.

It is difficult to appreciate the impression which this result wrought in Virginia, and indeed throughout the South. It may be summed up in the idea that at last a *National* administration—one in which the people of

all sections of the country would have a part—was to be installed at Washington. The event was celebrated with much speechmaking, band-playing, fireworks and so forth. In these jollifications I bore a part fully commensurate with my lung power, physical endurance and other like requisites for out-of-door speaking.

Personal assurances and letters not a few, came to me at this time, of an appreciative character. Perhaps the most unique of these testimonials was the following:

VA., December 3, 1884.

*Hon. Beverley B. Munford, House  
of Delegates, Richmond, Va.*

DEAR BEV.: I listened with mute eloquence to your grand Philippic last evening. Our talk of yesterday was happy on my part, and I am glad occasion has given rise to the admissibility of my sending you a line.

I did lend myself in November, 1883, to a feeling of pride and exultation over the intellectual inroads you were making in the affections of the people, when I said, "I will erect a series of monuments in my heart, eternally dedicated to your memory."

I love to talk freely with ambitious scions of grand old sires, and I am glad to remark, Virginia

—with her prestige—is enshrined in the hearts of her coming young men, the pride of any country, who will never lose their grip on the helm of state until she safely reaches the port of wonted honor and peace, systematically despised of late by the truckling truants of her once warm hearthstone.

With sincere wishes for your temporal and eternal welfare, I am, with high regard,

Yours sincerely,

---

P. S.—The many punches of last evening in honor of Cleveland's election are still gilding the horizon of my brain. I feel so elated that I can hardly maintain myself with becoming dignity.

The foregoing encomium was only surpassed by that of the enthusiastic countryman who presented my name in the Convention for reelection to the House of Delegates in the fall of '85. In a most vociferous speech he urged my nomination, concluding with the startling announcement, "My candidate, Mr. Chairman, has stamped upon his forehead, so all men may read, the immortal words, '*Sic semper tyrannis*'—'Give me liberty or give me death.'" Despite this handicap I

---

was for the third time elected, and upon the conclusion of this term in 1887 I removed, as we have seen, to the city of Richmond.

The next political adventure in which I had a personal interest resulted from my candidacy for a seat in the House of Delegates, and later for the Senate, from the City of Richmond, in both of which I was successful. The experiences of these two campaigns were unlike those of similar efforts in the country. In the country, I made my appeals in public addresses or by personal interviews with the voters. In the city, I soon found there were numerous men of more or less influence whose support it seemed all-important to secure, because they personally controlled the voters of certain localities, nationalities, crafts and such like. These magnates led or controlled their adherents much after the fashion of some tribal chief. They looked after them in trouble; secured them positions, political or otherwise; befriended their friends, and by all the many ways known to the ward politician linked their followers to them by the ties of interest and affection. Every election was an event in the life of these leaders and was utilized to strengthen their position, both with their followers and with the leaders of wider influence

and official place. The power of the ward politician with the latter depended largely upon his strength with the former, while no circumstance was so likely to weaken his hold upon the former as any evidence that his prestige at court was on the wane.

I need not pause to recite the means necessary—some of them devious—to secure the support of these Bosses. The best and surest method, however, was to satisfy them of your own strength among the mass of voters. It was to a successful candidate's cause that they desired to link their fortunes. However, their pledge once given they stood true, though, in the shifting fortunes of the contest, it became evident that their candidate was doomed to defeat.

Among the many influences which go to make up the power of successful political Bosses I reckon these two foremost: fidelity to their word and friends, and capacity to rightly read the signs of the times, and thus opportunely to declare for men and measures predestined to succeed. The so-called Boss is, as a rule, more the follower of popular movements, and the sponsor for strong men, than the dictator and tyrant he is generally represented to be.

Far below in skill or influence and personal worth were

---

the Ward Heelers—men of little personal following and influence for good, and yet whose friendship a candidate doubtful of his battle could not afford to despise. These men, like the Smith in the “Fair Maid of Perth,” fought for their own right hand. They had no sentiment, and their interest could only be quickened by the application of the golden spur. Many were the devices they employed for levying tribute upon unwary candidates. A favorite scheme was the reputed organization of political clubs glorified with such names as “The Invincibles,” “The Jeffersonians,” “Jackson’s Followers,” “The Unterrified,” and the like. Contributions for the purpose of defraying the clubs’ expenses and furthering the patriotic ends for which they were established, would be solicited. Coupled with the appeal usually came information of the candidate’s election as an honorary member, and hence party fealty and personal pride were both appealed to, to secure the much-coveted cash.

But generally the demand was as frank as it was urgent: “You need my support and that of my friends, and I need your money.” The clever candidate was he who could refuse, and yet not arouse the pronounced hostility of these Knights of the Ward. Only when

there was no serious opposition was it safe to gratify your impulse to send them with a curt answer along their way. All the recent statutes preventing the use of money in elections they regard with great disfavor as an unwarranted interference with their ancient and well-recognized rights.

A common characteristic of these men was that they never surrendered their supposed claims upon their benefactors. Once a candidate, and they cherished remembrance of the fact to their dying day. Once help them, and for all time to come they felt at liberty to levy tribute.

No recital of my excursion into politics would be complete which failed to make some mention of my attendance upon the Democratic State Conventions—institutions of blended political and social significance. There were two of these conventions held every four years—one to name a candidate for Governor, the other to select delegates to the National Convention of the party, which in turn named candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States. The primal objects of these conventions were as above indicated, but they presented opportunities for furthering the fortunes of political aspirants, and were the occasions



of social reunions which usually lent them far more interest than that derived from the mere event which brought them into being.

There was a species of evolution in the growth of the young politician whose first call perchance from the mass of his fellow-citizens came with his selection to represent in this broader arena his friends and neighbors of the hamlet or ward. His attendance upon the second convention would probably be signalized by being selected as a member of one of its important committees, and by being admitted into quasi-fellowship with the veterans in their plans for the success of men and measures. In the next he might attain official position or be selected to present the name of his favorite for nomination. Still later he might secure the honor of being called forth by its membership to address the Convention. Such speeches were usually made by two classes of men: those who had attained prominence and influence in the party, and those who were just coming into notice and to whom such calls came as a sign of increasing popularity. This latter class of speakers constituted, as it were, a waiting-list from which prospective candidates were most likely to be selected.

Allusion has been made to the social significance of

these occasions. The ordinary Virginian is a social being. Though possessing a pride of ancestry and a certain spirit of caste, he is one of the most democratic of men. From the isolation of his country home he loved to make these periodic visits to the capital and there revive old friendships and form new ones. His comrades of college days, his fellow-veterans of the Civil War, his staunch supporters in political struggles,—all these and other like associates quickened the desire for reunion. Up to the Convention city, therefore, like the tribes to Jerusalem, came the “Judges” and the “Majors” and all the varied personnel of those genuinely democratic gatherings—ready to bear a part in the work of the body, but equally intent upon having a good time. There was no question of the social impulse, while with it was mingled a certain patriotic feeling that Virginia was making a call upon their fealty. It was a great season for mint-juleps and other like potations. Many were the libations poured upon the altars of Virginia, of old times, of friendship, of the party—and its heroes past and present.

While the formal work of the Convention was transacted in the sight of all the people, yet there were many important matters settled in conferences outside the

---

Convention Hall. These latter were usually held at the principal hotel of the city, and about its corridors thronged the great body of delegates. Here the candidates opened their headquarters, and here the crowds gathered. Men from far and near mingled in the constantly changing stream of humanity—enthused with the joy of seeing old faces and recounting after years of separation the happenings of bygone days. The young had here a chance to meet the veterans of the party, and to catch glimpses at least of many men whose achievements upon the battle-field, in the forum, or at the Bar, had rendered their names household words through all the countryside.

The headquarters of the candidates were the Meccas toward which great crowds ebbed and flowed. In three rooms of varying size these would-be potentates held their court. To the first the public was admitted, and friends of the great men here made all comers welcome—dilating upon his virtues and the growing prospects of success. In the next gathered his trusty friends to receive reports and to formulate plans, while in the third the candidate himself, hid from profane eyes, took counsel with his managers or received such of the comers as it was thought best to admit to his

presence. About the place there was an air of mystery and excitement, suggestions of deep-laid plans and expectant surprises, loud talk and soft talk,—the whole scene permeated and crowned by clouds of tobacco smoke which ascended from the lips of the surging mass of perspiring patriots, in the minds of each of whom ran the thought that this was indeed the day “Big with the fate of Cæsar and of Rome.”

Another center of interest was the room in which the leaders met to formulate the rough draft of the platform. When skies were clear and harmony ruled the ranks, the platform was easily arranged and as readily accepted by the authorized committee and the Convention itself; but when divisions and divergence of views deep and irreconcilable existed, then from these gatherings emerged contending factions to fight out upon the floor of the body the question of the principles and policies to which the party should plight its faith.

Not the least characteristic incident of these gatherings was the discomfiture which the delegates and visitors experienced at the hotels. These hostelrys were all too small for the number of guests, but it was as much against the accepted custom of the hour as the pecuniary interests of the landlord to turn away a new-

---

comer as long as there was room for a cot in any part of the building. I recall with amused interest my experience on one occasion. I had stipulated in advance for a room, and in consideration of an increased price had secured all to myself the comforts of such an arrangement. I remember with what feelings of congratulation I withdrew about midnight from the crowd to the peace and seclusion of the room which my foresight had thus provided. It was even then a difficult task to lull one's self to slumber. From below ascended the noise of many voices; from above was yet to be heard the tramp of feet going in and out of the headquarters of a favorite candidate; while from across the hall emerged those peculiar sounds indicative of the fact that a coterie of congenial spirits were engaged in the national game of draw-poker. So it was, and yet sleep at length came, only to be broken by a resounding knock at my door. In a half-awakened state I admitted the intruder, demanding to know the cause of his untimely appearance. He explained that he was a belated delegate—a friend of my candidate for nomination—and had been informed by the hotel clerk that I occupied the only room in which were not gathered from two to six men. A part of my bed was his

modest request. As my companion sank to sleep he remarked, "I am afraid my snoring will disturb you, as I am unfortunately afflicted with that habit." Many hours of fruitless efforts to sleep convinced me not only of the truth of his warning, but of the futility of attempting by foresight or money to make one's self more comfortable than one's neighbors. When at length tired nature asserted its right to rest, I fell asleep somewhat cheered by the thought that this unwelcomed comer would on the morrow help forward my cause to victory. Despite this reflection, I could but feel that the old adage that "Politics makes strange bedfellows" was being demonstrated in a most realistic manner and in a way not at all to my liking.





## CHAPTER VII

### *Some Wanderings far Afield*



O American of English lineage, certainly no Virginian, steeped in the history and traditions of the Motherland, can, for the first time, set out to revisit the home of his forebears without having his heart strangely moved and his mind stimulated by the entrancing prospect before him. The glorious record of his people's progress, which has, as yet, been mirrored only on the pages of history or romance, will now be unrolled before him. The homes and graves of the great are there, and with swelling heart and uncovered head he can stand amid scenes made forever sacred by the Soldiers, Statesmen, Philosophers, Martyrs, Priests and Prophets of his race.

Thackeray, in his “Virginians,” has portrayed the feelings with which his hero set out for old England:

“All Americans,” says the author, “who love the Old Country—and what gently nurtured man or woman of Anglo-Saxon race does not?—have ere this rehearsed their English travels, and revisited in fancy the spots with which their hopes, their parents’ fond stories, and their friends’ descriptions have rendered them familiar.

“There are few things to me more affecting in the history of the quarrel which divided the two great nations than the recurrence of that word *Home*, as used by the younger toward the older country. Harry Warrington had his chart laid out. Before London, and its glorious temples of St. Paul’s and St. Peter’s; its grim Tower where the brave and loyal had shed their blood from Wallace down to Balmerino and Kilmarnock—pitied by gentle hearts; before the awful window at Whitehall, whence the martyr Charles had issued to kneel once more and then ascend to heaven:—before Playhouses, Parks and Palaces, wondrous resorts of wit, pleasure and splendor;—before Shakespear’s resting-place under the tall spire which rises by Avon, amidst the sweet Warwickshire pastures; before Derby, and Falkirk, and Culloden, where the cause



of honor and loyalty had fallen, it might be to rise no more; before all these points in their pilgrimage there was one which the young Virginian brothers held even more sacred, and that was the home of their family."

Harry Warrington, however, was only two generations removed from his pioneer grandfather—Henry Esmond, who had sought political safety and domestic happiness in the Virginia Plantations. Nearly three hundred years had rolled by since my ancestors set sail from the Thames. So for me there was no spot in old England preëminent in attractions because of family associations. My interest encompassed all the places made memorable by heroic or intellectual achievement, and by the birth or burial of the good and great. So, too, with regard to places around which romance had thrown the witchery of her charm. Indeed, I found these latter equal in interest with those where the tragedy or comedy of real life had actually been enacted. Thus Westminster Hall—with its haunting memories of grim State trials, and where Burke and Sheridan arraigned Warren Hastings with such incomparable eloquence—presented, of course, compelling interest, but not one whit more than the humble Law

Courts in which I could fancy Quirk, Gammon & Snap had plied their practice, or Sergeant Buzfuz had uttered his Philippics in the memorable trial of *Barrell v. Pickwick*. At Whitehall, as Thackeray says, I could look upon the window out of which Charles walked to execution, and with pathetic interest deplore that a man who could die so grandly could not have lived more nobly; but with almost like pathos I regarded the stone steps of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, because there upon the sympathetic bosom of Peggotty, David Copperfield had cried out his aching heart.

Suggestions, too, of the workaday life of old England were most alluring. Thus visions of roast beef, plum-puddings, foaming tankards, fox-hunting squires, bluff stage-coach drivers and rosy cheeked barmaids combined to make a picture as attractive as it was real.

My feelings with respect to Scotland and Ireland were only second in sympathetic interest to those with which I regarded England.

Scotland! The Land of the Thistle and Heather! with her mountains, lakes and valleys, all haunted with the wild stories of warring clans and chieftains. The home of Burns—that poet of humanity—and of Scott,

---

who has peopled all the countryside with the fabled folk of his wondrous fancy.

Ireland, too, is a land to love—"The Emerald Gem of the Western World," as her poet sings. Here, hand-in-hand with Tom Moore, one may wander on entranced by the beauty of the scenery and the stirring events with which all the land is charmed.

Of all these thoughts and so much more my mind was filled when in the early summer of 1887 I stepped aboard the good ship *City of Rome*, and bade farewell to home. Not that I was one whit disloyal to the land of my birth, or could for a moment contrast with regret her position with that of the Mother-Isle beyond the seas. I felt that America was the fulfilment of so much that had been hoped and struggled for in the old land, and that I had as much right to glory in the people from whom I sprung as the veriest Cockney born within the sound of the bells of Mary-le-Bow. Or, in the words of Hamlet:

"I have some rights of memory in this kingdom—  
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me."

My ocean trip was the same in incident, or want of incident, with that of the many thousands who each

year cross from shore to shore. It was, however, my first voyage, and so every scene and sensation possessed the charm of novelty. There were, both in fact and figure, days of cloud and days of sunshine. Upon occasions, as Dr. Holmes so aptly remarks, "I made my contribution to the Atlantic", while again, under cloudless skies and over seas whose every wave was charmed, our good ship bounded forward on her way.

There are few moments more delightful than when cosily wrapped in your steamer rug you abandon yourself to the beauty and wonder with which you are surrounded. Sky and sea seem but the complement the one of the other—reflecting back the wealth of ever-changing light and color and all the mystery of boundless space. Only surpassed perchance in charm is the scene, when with day's decline the stars take up their silent vigils.

Seven days of prosperous voyage and *The City of Rome* brought us off the mouth of Queenstown Harbour. From ship to shore was but a step, and soon I found myself standing on the soil of the Old World.

## IRELAND

There is nothing new which I can record. The path of the Tourist in all the old countries is well trodden, and I shall only jot down some of my wanderings and chance impressions.

Landing at Queenstown, I went on to Cork, some ten miles distant. Thus my first impression of Ireland was formed in this her most typical city. Never had I seen a more beautiful country. Glowing with green, stretch the hills and meadows—"along the pleasant waters of the River Lee." Hard by is Blarney Castle. I doubt not the significance now attaching to the word had its origin in the speech and manner of the people living within sight of its tower. I did not kiss the stone. It would be a dangerous experiment, seeing it is embedded in the side of the castle wall nigh midway between turret and foundation.

From Cork I journeyed in a four-horse stage-coach to Bantry Bay, Glengariff and the far-famed Lakes of Killarney. This trip, covering a distance of fifty miles, traverses a country of great natural beauty and picturesqueness. The land, however, is sterile and the people are poor. A little incident served to illustrate

the latter fact, and the wide-spread desire among certain classes of the people to find a new home in America—that Eldorado beyond the seas. My companion and I were approached near the Lakes of Killarney by a sweet-faced Irish girl who had goat's milk for sale. Having bought far more than we desired, because of our wish to hear her talk, and having been rewarded by a profusion of thanks and blessings assured from many Saints, I ventured to suggest that a maiden of such manifest charms might find a more befitting place as the queen of some cottage, rather than selling goat's milk. To my remark the girl, with evident sincerity, replied that it would cost thirty-five shillings to get married, that the bride would have to pay this charge, and that despite the alluring prospect which I depicted, if she ever amassed such a store, she would labor on until a sufficient sum had been saved to buy a steerage ticket to America.

I was not disappointed in the Lakes of Killarney, nor in the wild beauty of the mountain fastnesses which surround them. In striking contrast with the latter was the island of Innisfallen, which rests so peacefully on the bosom of one of the lakes. Looking out upon the island, wrapped in the soft glow of the setting sun,

---

I recalled the lines of Moore—for my hand seldom left that of my gentle guide.

“ Sweet Innisfallen, fare thee well!

May calm and sunshine long be thine.

How fair thou art, let others tell,

While but to feel how fair is mine.”

From Killarney I went on to Dublin, traveling at night in order to enjoy the beauty of the long twilight and the novelty of the early sunrise, for at that season the days were some eighteen hours long. It is not the land of the “ Midnight Sun,” but yet one from which it seems very loath to leave, or as Moore so tenderly sings:

“ Where the sun seems to linger with so fond a delay,  
That the night only draws a thin veil o’er the day.”

Dublin is well worth a visit, Trinity College, Christ Church Cathedral, the Royal Gallery of Art, the Old Irish Parliament Building, St. Patrick’s Cathedral and Phoenix Park, all of which I visited, are among the many places of historic interest. The Court-rooms, about which I could fancy the eloquence of Plunkett and

Grattan and Phillips and other brilliant Irish orators still lingered, possessed, of course, for me, unique attraction.

From Dublin I went by rail to Londonderry, which is in the extreme north of the island. Macaulay's description of the famous siege was fresh in my mind, and so every spot associated with the struggle between king and people possessed great interest. While here, I found my first shamrock. I had thought to see it on every sward, but such was not my experience. Many explanations are given as to how and why the leaf acquired its present place in the sentiment and life of the Irish people. The most generally accepted theory is that Saint Patrick used the little plant to symbolize the Trinity and explain its significance. Tom Moore, however, with the poet's fondness for sentiment of another sort, records that Wit, Valor and Love, wandering through the island, adopted it as representative of the trio; and so the Irish people, strong in these qualities, made it their national emblem.

Belfast is, of course, an Irish city, and yet so different from her sister cities to the south. These differences are accounted for by the fact that in Belfast the Scotch-Irish and the Protestant faith dominate. It has



---

all the air of a modern city, lacking, however, much of the picturesqueness of the old Irish towns. Here are the great linen industries, and the city and adjacent country seemed prosperous.

My visit preceded by only a few days the Prince of Orange day, which is observed on the anniversary of the battle of the Boyne. Remarking on the many preparations everywhere evident in anticipation of the event, a native assured me that the day and its happenings would well repay me for prolonging my stay—adding that my hotel would afford me exceptional advantages for witnessing the street fights which would surely occur between the Orangemen and Roman Catholics, as on both sides the day would be declared a failure unless there had been a brave show of shillalahs and many broken heads to attest the prowess of their owners.

But no matter what may be the predisposition of the Irish people to engage in these diversions with each other, the visitor, unless he represents some political or religious feud, is sure of a most cordial welcome and unfailing courtesy. The wit and genial qualities of the people are always in evidence, and every happening, from a christening to a funeral, is a new opportunity

for their manifestation. The remark, attributed I believe to Sydney Smith, who referring to some opponent said he trusted to his memory for his wit, could never truthfully be applied to any son of Old Erin.

At the time of my visit to Ireland, the subject of Home Rule for its people was attracting attention all over the world. I studied the conditions and wishes of the people, and balanced, as best I could, the local needs with the necessities and sentiments of the Empire. I find in my notes made at the time, the following summary of what I thought would be the best and probable policy of the Imperial Government.

“ In a system of conciliatory legislation which will accord them the management of their local affairs, so far as it is consistent with the preservation of the British Empire, and in the elevation of her representative men to positions of trust in the Government, will be found the surest way to bring some measure of contentment to her people—certainly it can thus be brought to the more conservative elements. While doubtless a larger measure of local Self-Government will be accorded her as the result of her present demand for Home Rule, yet I do not think, from my observations, that the dreams of so many of her people, who

look forward beyond Home Rule to Irish Independence, will ever be realized. The importance of preserving intact the United Kingdoms, and maintaining the power and integrity of the British Empire, will always prove the great stumbling-block in the way of realizing her aspiration to stand once more among the nations of the Earth."

The events of the past sixteen years would seem to justify my conclusions made at that time. What the Irish people would have accomplished had they not been linked with a people between whom there existed so little fellowship, or even understanding, must always remain an interesting question. A country which numbers among her sons such men as Burke, Grattan, Curran, Phillips, Swift, Goldsmith, Moore and others of almost equal gifts, must always possess a fascination, and every problem affecting the happiness of her people enlists the sympathy of the English-speaking world.

### SCOTLAND

Of Scotland I will record four memories—a day at Ayr, my trip through the Trossachs, my stay at Edinburgh, and my visit to Abbotsford and the grave of its master hard by, amid the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey.

One of the most delightful days of my life was the one spent at Ayr. The country is beautiful, the day was fine and I wandered on amid scenes redolent with memories of Scotland's peasant bard. The thatched-roof cottage where Burns was born, the "Tam O'Shanter Inn," "Alloway Kirk," the "Twa Brigs o' Ayr," and finally, the memorial which has been erected to his fame amid the "banks and braes o' Bonnie Doon," were all visited.

Meeting, by happy chance, a bright Scotch boy, my companion and I produced a copy of Burns's poems and prevailed upon him to read for us some of its pages. Seated by the roadside, we listened to this native while with evident pride and appreciation he read the poems of his great countryman. The scenes about us, rich with associations; the quaint, yet mellifluous accents of the reader,—all combined to lend to the lines of the poet an attractiveness and beauty which I had never realized before.

Quite different in kind was a half-hour spent at the Tam O'Shanter Inn, which remains to-day just as it was the night when Tam and Souter Johnny enjoyed their memorable bout. I was escorted into the room and placed in the chair occupied by Tam on the occasion in

question. From the number and hilarity of the company which I found assembled, I am persuaded that Tam's countrymen, unawed by his trying fate, are still following in the footsteps of the poet's hero. But my fancy was not with the drinking wights around me. It was doubtless upon just such a gathering that Burns had looked, or in which, more probably, he had borne a part. But the scene at hand seemed prosaic and commonplace. Its counterpart of the long ago possessed the charm because its humor and pathos had been illumined by the poet's touch. As I walked out into the gathering darkness, I recalled with amused interest how Tam, with faltering courage, had faced the triple terrors of the storm, the apparitions of Alloway Kirk and his irate dame, who by her lonely fireside sat—

“Knitting her brows like gathering storm,  
And nursing her wrath to keep it warm.”

The trip across the waters of Loch Katrine and Loch Lomond and through the Trossachs was all too quickly passed. It is a romance-haunted region, where to the beauty of nature has been added the glamour with which the Wizard of the North has invested all the land.

As we passed on over the waters of Loch Katrine, the scenes about me seemed strangely familiar, and I found myself regarding the place where Ellen Douglas had walked with Malcolm Græme, or graciously welcomed the Knight of Snowdown to Ellen's Isle. But even my credulity was overtaxed when the guide pointed out, with exact precision, the spot where FitzJames's horse fell dead, and where that valiant Saxon had grappled with Roderick Dhu in mortal combat. Better authenticated is the spot, near the lake, where brave Rob Roy sleeps.

“ Then clear the weeds from off his grave,  
And let us chant a passing stave  
In honor of that hero brave.”

Thus sings the poet at the grave of that intrepid Knight of the Road and daring cattle thief.

At the eastern shore of Loch Lomond we left our steamer and took a stage-coach. At this point is the little waterfall of Inversnaid where Wordsworth saw the Highland Girl, so beautifully celebrated in one of his poems. It is wonderful how literature humanizes, and with what new interest a spot is invested by some heroic

act or the fancied presence of a winsome face or girlish form.

“Nor am I loath, though pleased at heart,  
Sweet Highland Girl! from thee to part;  
For I, methinks, till I grow old,  
As fair before me shall behold,  
As I do now, the cabin small,  
The lake, the bay, the waterfall:  
And thee, the spirit of them all!”

On through the Trossachs I drove until I reached Stirling. Here the Old Castle and the view from its battlements well repay a visit. In the olden days it was regarded as impregnable, and was for years the court residence of the Scottish kings. From the turret one sees the battle-fields of Bannockburn and Stirling Bridge, while to the west stretches in incomparable beauty the vale of Monteith.

Of my stay in Edinburgh I have the most grateful recollections. It is indeed a city of great attractions, and one can well appreciate the patriotic pride with which all Scotchmen regard her. “Edina! Scotia’s Darling Seat,” is the way in which her poet addresses her. While a populous city, yet it is neither size, nor wealth, nor trade which lends her preëminence. She is

the intellectual, religious, artistic and social center of the Northern Kingdom. She appeals to the sentiment and patriotism, to the mind and heart of Scotland. Here are grouped her Universities, theological seminaries, art galleries, libraries and finest churches. Here, too, have been reared the monuments to her sons whom she most delights to honor—Scott, Burns, Dugald Stewart, Adam Smith, Ferguson and Ramsay. The castle of Edinburgh, Holyrood Palace, and other places of historic interest are there, but of these I make no note. My mind reflects the picture of this city as the embodiment in stone and bronze, in park and avenue, in dome and spire, of the intellectual vigor and tenacious purpose of this sturdy people.

From Edinburgh to Abbotsford was a natural, as it is an easy journey. In the beautiful country which borders the Tweed, Scott built his noble home. The study, library, drawing-rooms and armory are shown to visitors, just as left by the great author. Everything within and without the home suggests the man of taste and letters, and one, too, whose personality and genius people of every land felt a pride in honoring. The house abounds in articles of historic interest and beauty presented by kings, princes and prelates from all over



the world. Hard by, amid the ruins of Dryburgh Abbey, I found his grave. The stone bears the simple inscription, "Sir Walter Scott, Baronet. Died September 26th, 1832." No labored epitaph was needed to recount his virtues or perpetuate his fame.

### ENGLAND

"Earth has not anything to show more fair—  
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by  
A sight so touching in its majesty."

Thus from the arch of Westminster Bridge, Wordsworth addresses London. It was the poet's eye, however, which could catch the vision of beauty and majesty in this fog-haunted city.

London rather appeals to my mind and sentiment. It is the picture in miniature of the home of a mighty race—the presentment in scene and symbol of its aspirations and achievements. In monument and temple, in palace and prison, church and court, I could read the story of a people's progress, and how from this pulsing center they had gone forth to conquer the wilds or rekindle life amid the embers of dying civilizations.

If London is the Mecca of all men of English blood, then surely Westminster Abbey is the shrine. I shall always recall with profound sensibility the moment when first I stood within the portals of that venerable Fane. Here since the thirteenth century have prayers and praises been offered to the King of Kings. Here have been crowned the sovereigns of England since the reign of Edward the Confessor. Here are buried scores of kings and queens and princes, and greatest of all, the men who in the realm of literature and science, in the field and forum, in the pulpit and at the Bar, have earned the right to sleep their last sleep in this Temple of Fame. On every hand are the graves and memorials of statesmen, soldiers, poets and divines. It is true that many of England's greatest sons find their last resting-place outside of its walls. Wellington and Nelson sleep beneath the great dome of St. Paul's, Shakespeare in the chancel of the church at Stratford, and John Milton in Cripplegate Churchyard. Still, nowhere else on earth have been entombed the ashes of such a galaxy of great men, or memorials reared to so many of equal fame, as in this venerable pile, which is at once a Pantheon and a Temple.

“ Here ”—Washington Irving says—“ are congre-

---

gated the bones of great men of past times who have filled history with their deeds and the earth with their renown."

The Poet's Corner was to me the place of the greatest interest. Macaulay, Dickens and Sheridan lie side by side, while just above their graves, upon the walls, are the memorials to Shakespeare, Addison, Burns and Southey. The monuments to Milton and Gray are together, while between those to Dryden and Chaucer I found a bust of Longfellow, the only American ever honored by a memorial in the Abbey. The monument to John Wesley interested me no little, as did the one to Major André, whose pathetic fate always appealed so strongly to my sympathy. But time would fail the mention of the innumerable memorials with which Westminster abounds. Lord Chatham, Fox and Pitt head the long list of statesmen; Mansfield, first among the world's greatest jurists; Newton, Darwin and Herschel among the scientists; Bishop Wilberforce, Keble, Kingsley, Wordsworth and on with the long and glorious roll.

Two impressions above all others were left upon my mind: first, the thought that here one might read in the lives and achievements of her great men the story

of a people's genesis and progress; and second, the catholicity of sentiment which ultimately characterizes the public opinion of England with reference to her sons. Macaulay, I believe, refers to the Abbey as "The Temple of Reconciliation." How true this is we appreciate when we recall the great dead who there sleep side by side, and the memorials to others equally divergent in their lives and sentiments. Churchmen and Dissenters, Tories and Whigs, Royalists and Republicans, the lordly heir of wealth and power and the humble peasant whose only claim to fame is some intellectual or heroic achievement.

The day will no doubt come when England, in the plenitude of her tolerance, will erect in this Valhalla a memorial to her great Commoner—Oliver Cromwell.

Next to Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral interested me most. The great church, the crowning work of Sir Christopher Wren, is a noble pile. While only dating from a time subsequent to the great fire, yet it occupies the site of old St. Paul's, built during the Roman occupation, and tradition asserts that in more remote times a temple to Diana stood upon the spot.

The Cathedral, like Westminster Abbey, is filled with

---

the graves and memorials of notable men. Here are buried the two national heroes whom England most delights to honor—Nelson and Wellington: the one whose prowess made Britannia Ruler of the Wave, and the other who at Waterloo vanquished the World's Conqueror. Their graves are in the Cathedral's crypt, while in the body of the church are their monuments. The first bears this inscription:

“Erected at the Public expense to the memory of Vice-Admiral Horatio Viscount Nelson, K.B., to record his splendid and unparalleled achievements during a life spent in the service of his country and terminated in the moment of victory by a glorious death in the memorable action off Cape Trafalgar.”

The only inscription upon the monument to the Iron Duke is,

“Arthur, First Duke of Wellington.”

To the English mind there is high inspiration in the fact that these two chieftains, victors by sea and land, should in their last sleep rest side by side in the heart of the nation's capital and within the sacred walls of its great Cathedral. Tennyson voiced the exultant

thought of his countrymen when, at the burial of Wellington, he addressed the shade of Nelson with the ringing words:

“Mighty seaman, this is he  
Was great by land as thou by sea.  
.  
.  
Now, to the roll of muffled drums,  
To thee the greatest soldier comes;  
.  
.  
His foes were thine; he kept us free;  
Oh! give him welcome, this is he,  
Worthy of our gorgeous rites,  
And worthy to be laid by thee.”

I recall with especial interest the monument then recently erected to “Chinese Gordon.” It bears the high encomium which he so well deserved:

“To Major-General Charles George Gordon, C.B., who, at all times and everywhere, gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor; his sympathy to the suffering; his heart to God. Born at Woolwich, 28th January, 1833. Slain at Khartoum, 26th January, 1885.”

Slain at Khartoum! What a sad story of heroism, endurance, mistake and death that simple line recalls.

Then, too, we can picture his countrymen battling with tropic suns, the sands of the deserts and the hosts of the Mahdi, to reassert their power and honor his memory. When at length the flag of England again floated over Khartoum, it was a strange sight which greeted the wondering eyes of the Mahdi's followers. Then with draped flags and muffled drums, but with all the pomp and circumstance of power, the victorious army paid their tribute to the memory of the dead hero, and the burial rites were celebrated over the spot where the hot sands of the desert had sucked up his blood.

Amid the numerous memorials which filled the Cathedral, we naturally looked for one to its famous architect, but only a simple slab over one of the portals commemorates his achievement. It bears the words,

“Lector, si monumentum requiris, circumspice.”

Not the least pleasing recollection I have of the great Cathedral is that of a service which I attended. Thousands of people crowded into the nave of the church, and after the prayers and praises, listened to a sermon by Canon Liddon, whom, with the exception of Canon Farrar, I reckoned the strongest preacher I had the privilege of hearing during my wanderings abroad.

After St. Paul's Cathedral, I counted Westminster Hall as the place next in interest. While virtually a part of the Parliament building, it is far richer in historic interest, as it is in its length of years. Built by the son of the Conqueror, it has for ages been the scene of coronations, abdications and other gorgeous ceremonials, but most of all, here have occurred the great State trials, which to the lawyer must always prove of absorbing interest. Chief, of course, was that of Charles the First. A strange paradox—a king tried by his subjects and condemned to death! Those sturdy Ironsides, though victors by arms over the king and his forces, would go no further unless with the sanction of a Court—albeit the Court was of their own creation. It shows the English instinct for law, and deep-seated aversion to disregard its forms.

In this same Hall, Cromwell was acclaimed Lord Protector, while eight years afterward his skull surmounted one of its pinnacles. Here were tried and condemned to death, among many others, Sir William Wallace, Sir Thomas More, Sir Walter Raleigh and the Earl of Strafford. Here a like fate befell that strange character in English history, Guy Fawkes, and here the sentence of condemnation was pronounced against that great philosopher and jurist, Lord Bacon.



Perhaps, however, the most picturesque of all its many happenings was the impeachment proceedings of Warren Hastings. Macaulay has presented a picture of the opening scenes of this trial as dramatic in setting as is brilliant the author's power of description.

“There have been spectacles” [says Macaulay] “more dazzling to the eye, more gorgeous with jewelry and cloth of gold, more attractive to grown-up children, than that which was then exhibited at Westminster; but, perhaps, there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated, a reflective and imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interests which belong to the near and the distant, to the present and to the past, were collected on one spot and in one hour. All the talents and all the accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilization were now displayed, with every advantage that could be derived both from coöperation and from contrast. Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backwards through many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid, or far away, over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky natives, living under strange stars, worshipping strange gods, and writing strange characters from right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit, according to forms handed down from

the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the Lord of the Holy City of Benares and over the ladies of the Princely House of Oude."

The whole scene was indeed one of great interest and brilliancy, but to my mind the center of attraction was the group of managers for the prosecution, among them Burke, Fox and Sheridan. Neither Greece nor Rome in their palmiest days could have marshaled a triumvirate so gifted in intellect, learning and rhetorical powers. Burke, who Macaulay declares was "superior to every orator, ancient or modern, in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination," was the leading figure, and, with Sheridan, bore off the honors of the occasion. His speech in opening for the prosecution has become a classic, and is a masterpiece of forensic eloquence.

Tradition tells us that on the night when the great gathering at Westminster Hall was listening with wonder to Sheridan's eloquence, an audience scarcely less brilliant at Covent Garden was greeting with like acclaim the first rendition of "The Rivals." Thus, on the same day, he won his title to enduring fame in the dual rôle of orator and dramatist.

Despite the vigor and eloquence with which Burke and his associates arraigned the prisoner, he was destined, as we know, to ultimate triumph. Seven years, however, elapsed between the day so graphically described by Macaulay, and the final judgment, and few of those who bore a conspicuous part in the drama were alive to witness its closing scene. A grave in Westminster Abbey was the final judgment of his countrymen upon the character and achievements of Warren Hastings, while England's peaceful rule over India's unnumbered millions attests the marvelous manner in which he assisted in laying the foundations of her power in that far-away land.

From the judgment-hall to the prison the way is broad and open, and so from Westminster I turned to the Tower of London. This aggregation of buildings presents many points of interest to the student and antiquarian. Portions date from the period of the Roman occupation. It has filled the rôle of palace, fortress and prison. Here are now kept the crown jewels and great collections of armors, and here are exhibited the blocks and axes—grim reminders of a bloody past. To me the places of peculiar interest were the rooms in which notable State prisoners had been

confined: chief among these was that in which Sir Walter Raleigh spent twelve years of his life—only at last to be led forth to execution at the behest of that pusillanimous creature, James the Second. A place of most pathetic interest is the little chapel, St. Peter ad Vincula, with its burial-ground adjoining. Here are buried Lady Jane Grey, Anne Boleyn, Thomas Cromwell, Sir Thomas More, Lord Somerset, the Duke of Monmouth and many others almost as notable. Some one has said, “There is no sadder spot on earth than this little cemetery. Death is there associated, not as in Westminster and St. Paul’s, with genius and virtue, with public veneration and with imperishable renown . . . but with whatever is darkest in human nature and in human destiny . . . with all the miseries of fallen greatness and blighted fame.”

As I walked out of the old prison, away from its grim walls and haunting memories, it felt good to be in the glad sunshine and mingle once more with the cheer and bustle of every-day life.

Time, however, would fail me to describe all the places of interest within the gates of England’s metropolis. Churches, courts, galleries, museums, prisons, parks, bridges, monuments greet you on every hand;

---

each with its compelling appeal to your sense of sight and sentiment. Then, too, the clubs, coffee-houses and other like resorts, fragrant with memories of Dr. Johnson, Addison, Dryden, Lamb, Steele and all that goodly company of brilliant minds and genial souls,—these places, of course, must always possess a fascination for men of English speech and lineage. The whole city, however, is a constant reminder of a great past, and of the men whose achievements seem a part of its very existence. Here Shakespeare conceived his incomparable dramas, and Milton held converse with the skies. Here Bacon, like some embodiment of intellectual power, pondered: Carlyle wrote his virile pages; Thackeray satirized the men and women of his day; and Dickens, with infinite humor and most pathetic pen, made his moving appeals. Only less real are the fancied presence of the characters with which these two novelists have filled the old houses and streets of the city. Colonel Newcome, Becky Sharp, Arthur Pendenis, David Copperfield, Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Micawber, Traddles, Little Dorrit,—these and their myriad associates are there, and in a veritable world of fancy one may roam, the whole lit by the light of sweetest memories, for these are the friends of our halcyon days.

Any recital of my London experiences, however short, would be sadly lacking which did not record my kindly recollections of the omnibus drivers, and my impressions of the city, gathered while riding by their side. From this coign of vantage, I could take in all the street sights and listen with amused interest, not to say profit, to the mass of information—part fact and part fancy—retailed by these gossipy Jehus. They are most expert drivers, and they guide their lumbering coaches through the mass of vehicles which fill the narrow, crooked streets in a manner worthy of the accomplishments of Mr. Four-in-hand Fosbrook.

In a trip from Charing Cross to the Bank, one may catch a picture in miniature of the present life of the great city, set in a frame of ancient buildings and other memorials of bygone days.

But how shall I attempt to recount my wanderings through England beyond the gates of her great city? Where shall I begin, and when could I hope to end? Cities, towns, hamlets; great cathedrals, quaint old parish churches; winding roads, lined with hedges and trees, the growth of centuries; castles and manor-houses; battle-fields, spanning the years from Hastings to Marston Moor; ancient universities, and schools

scarcely less venerable in years; palaces of kings, and thatched-roof cottages of yeomen,—all these, like the parts of some great panorama, fill the land. The eyes with rapture greet the inspiring scenes, while the heart acknowledges the subtle charm with which history, tradition and romance have invested them.

Only a few of my pilgrimages can be recorded, and first among these must be that to Stratford, where was born, and now lies buried, the greatest genius and intellect of the English-speaking race.

I recall with keen interest how, without guide or guide-book, I stepped from the railway train and made my way along the quiet streets of the still, quaint old town. Passing the Blue Lion and the Green Dragon, I, by happy chance, took up my abode at the Red Horse Inn, which I subsequently ascertained Washington Irving had patronized and given to fame in his delightful “Sketch Book.” Of course, the places of interest are all well known: the old house where the poet was born; the schoolroom in which he ciphered; the cottage of Ann Hathaway, his boyish sweetheart; the park, where he displayed his propensities as a poacher; the New Place, as it is known, where the only remaining memory of his time are the mulberry trees

beneath which he meditated; and finally, the church within whose chancel rests his bones, and which has thus become a shrine to men and women the wide world over. The country about is one of quiet, restful beauty, while the old town remains, I was assured, little changed since the day when about its streets walked one of the most remarkable men of all time—one whose genius sounded all the depths of knowledge, and yet of whose life we know next to nothing. Everything about the place left an indelible impression upon my mind. Everything, from the bright brass kettles in the bar of the Red Horse Inn, to the stately memorial which has been reared as a tribute to, rather than as a memorial of, the immortal Shakespeare.

Near by is Warwick Castle and the ruins of Kenilworth, both of which I visited with an interest which can be readily appreciated. Warwick Castle is one of the best preserved of the many ancient castles of old England. It abounds with treasures of the greatest historic value, both in and out. I noted with especial interest some beautiful cedars, which I was informed had been brought back from the Holy Land by the Crusaders and planted there under the shadow of the Castle.



Kenilworth, of course, is simply a ruin, overgrown with vines, but one's fancy pictures it with the gorgeous scenes portrayed by Scott in his great novel.

Next in fragrance are my memories of a trip to Oxford.

One of the delights of my boyhood days was reading "Verdant Green," the story of an Oxford undergraduate. So it was with a mind filled with pictures of the old city, its Colleges and the incidents which mark the associations of Town and Gown, that I took up my abode at the Mitre, an ancient hostelry, hard by the gates of Christ Church College.

It would be difficult to fancy a situation more attractive to a reflective mind than that presented by this great University. Here the charm of the past is linked with the energy and enthusiasm of the present. Here venerable buildings and beautiful memorials tell of the centuries of intellectual effort and achievement, while the virile life of the young manhood which throngs her courts gives assurance that Oxford, like the world itself, is always young. Matthew Arnold speaks of Oxford as "Whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age." As one wanders through her gardens, courts and terraces, or beneath

the shadow of her ivy-covered walls, he feels indeed that the spell of enchantment rests upon all the scene.

I regarded with peculiar interest the great dining-halls of the various Colleges, adorned with portraits of their distinguished sons, and the apartments of the undergraduates. Into the latter I peered with a feeling akin to pain, because I knew my old friends Verdant Green, Mr. Bouncer—not to mention the latter's dogs, Hus and Bus—and all their goodly comrades, would not greet me. The nearest approach I got to the character and happenings of their time was to sit within the precincts of Brasenose College and chat with the old janitor of the life of the undergraduates—of the conflicts between Town and Gown, and all the incidents and interests of college days.

Just outside the city of London, among many others, are three places within close radius which well repay a visit: Windsor, Eton and the old church of Stoke Poges. I spent a delightful day at the first. The grounds of the Castle, its apartments—to which the public have admission—the beautiful chapel, and the Frogmore Memorial, where is buried Albert, the Prince Consort, were all visited. Here, however, as at Eton, my republican sympathies were somewhat ruffled by

the reflection that it was the accident of birth which gave to its inmates the peculiar privileges and high inspiration which invest palace and school. Eton, with its stately buildings, its centuries of patronage by the great and rich, the very uniforms of its boys—broad-cloth jackets and silk hats—all seem to suggest that here the way to learning is open to those who have, rather than to those who need.

Howbeit, I doubt not there is a place in the economy of a great nation for a class of men who from boyhood have felt the obligations of *noblesse oblige*. Wellington declared that upon the playgrounds of Eton were nurtured the men whose spirits animated the invincible square at Waterloo and drove back in defeat the old guard of Napoleon.

Rugby, of course, is another of England's ancient foundations devoted to the schooling of her youth. It possessed for me even greater attractions than Eton. It was an old acquaintance, because when a boy I had read "Tom Brown's School Days" at Rugby, and in later years the beautiful poem in which Matthew Arnold paid tribute to the great master who sleeps within the chapel.

Stoke Poges is a typical country parish church and

burial-ground of the kind which are to be found all through rural England. Its peculiar claim upon our interest, of course, arises from the fact that here Gray wrote his "Elegy," that masterpiece of pure English and mellifluous verse; and here, too, the poet is buried.

There is something peculiarly appealing to me about these old churches, surrounded with the graves of those who aforetime worshiped at their altars. How much more appropriate that her children should here rest than in some spot hard by the world's tramping feet, or even amid sylvan scenes devoid of any sign of the faith in whose surety they looked for immortality. With Longfellow—

" I like the good old Saxon word  
Which calls the burial-ground ' God's Acre.' "

Of the cathedral towns of England, if indeed it may be entitled to that distinction, the one of which I have the most pleasant recollections is Chester. I of course appreciate that the Cathedral itself is not so pretentious or beautiful as those of York, Winchester, Salisbury, Ely and many others; but all in all, Chester seems most attractive, when I run over in my mind the

list of towns visited in which these great monuments of medieval faith and art lift their heads. The old city is itself one of the most ancient in England. It was a walled town, and these venerable protectors of its people remain intact to-day, just as in the more troublous times. Now, however, they serve as promenades and playgrounds. It was from the walls of Chester that Charles watched the battle and saw his cause go down before the redoubtable prowess of Cromwell and his followers.

But any recital of my wanderings through England, however meager, would be incomplete if it failed to record my impressions of her vast industrial and commercial interests, as exemplified in the great manufacturing centers and trading ports which I visited. Of these, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and Liverpool were, with the exception of London, the most conspicuous. In the first-mentioned city the Royal Jubilee Exposition, commemorative of the fiftieth year of Victoria's illustrious reign, was in progress. I thus had an opportunity not only to observe the manufacturing interests of Manchester, but of the nation itself, presented within the walls of the great exhibition.

The whole country adjacent to these centers—indeed

from Manchester to London—is filled with factories, forges and furnaces. Speaking broadly, I was never out of sight of a smoke-stack during the two hundred miles of travel between the two cities. The enormous products of these veritable beehives of industry are carried to every quarter of the globe by the merchant marine of old England, a myriad fleet which constitutes largely over one half of the sea-going vessels of the world. At Liverpool I saw, as nowhere else, the extent of this far-reaching commerce. Her great docks filled with the shipping of every clime, the vast concourse of vessels flying the Union Jack, all attested England's primacy upon the sea—a primacy, be it said to her credit, not alone in engines of war, but in the caravans of commerce which bring together in reciprocal interest and mutual good-will the widely severed peoples of the globe. Let it be remembered, too, that this great commerce has been built upon principles of far-sighted statesmanship, which find their exemplification in the policy of the open door at every port of trade where England's influence is supreme.

As I contemplated these evidences of her progress in commerce and wealth, I recalled with pleasure that in the selfsame age which witnessed these great material

achievements she had Tennyson and Robert Browning as her poets and seers, and Gladstone and Arthur Balfour to sound the key-note of her national life.

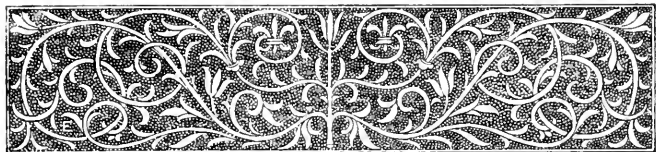
When at length I stood upon the shores of the Channel, en route to the continent, I could but realize that what was to me old England was to the peoples living farther east a new land. Art, science, literature, commerce, law and government,—these were the high attainments of the nations bordering the Mediterranean, while northern Germany and the British Isles lay as in primeval days. South and east of the great inland sea, before Greece and Rome had reached their zenith, other civilizations had risen and waned. Assyria, Babylon and Egypt, these were mighty powers, of whose glories now only ruined temples and tenantless tombs remain. What were the causes of their decline? Is England great only because she is young? Will she too, with her kin-folk Germany and America, go the way of all the nations of the past? Will Macaulay's vision of the traveler from New Zealand sketching from the broken arch of Westminster Bridge the ruins of St. Paul's Cathedral be fulfilled? Are nations doomed to a period of growth, greatness and decay? Wherewithal shall a people make enduring their civilization, or es-

tablish for all time the muniments of their national greatness? I am persuaded that with power must be linked justice; that righteousness and love must inspire its aspirations and dominate its policies, if a nation would survive the strain and stress of time and change. This warning thought has been voiced for England in the words of her poet:

“ For heathen heart that puts her trust  
In reeking tube and iron shard,  
All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
And guarding calls not Thee to guard.”

But to the nation great with all the triumphs of this golden age, and jealous to perpetuate unimpaired her ideals and power, there comes across the ages the reassuring words of the great prophet to the Hebrews: “ They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”





## CHAPTER VIII

### *At Home*



IRGINIA! How manifold the thoughts and sentiments which that name awakens! How inspiring the vision of her genesis, and how romantic the lives of the men who wrought to make it real!

The name carries the mind back to the days of the Great Queen in whose honor the new-found land was christened; to the brilliant galaxy of poets who adorned her reign; to her dauntless seamen and intrepid soldiers, and the wild spirit of adventure which sent them forth to find under distant stars new lands and strange peoples. As Charles Kingsley says, "The mighty shout of joy which greeted Elizabeth's entry into London was the key-note of fifty glorious years—the expression of a new-found strength and freedom, which vented

itself at home in drama and in song, abroad in mighty conquests, achieved with all the laughing recklessness of boys at play."

We recall, too, the Spanish Armada and its miraculous destruction in the Channel, thus opening a way across the Atlantic to men of English blood and Protestant faith. Drake bears the Union Jack to victory on every sea, while Raleigh makes the first attempt to people with Anglo-Saxons the Western wilds, and thus becomes in truth Virginia's founder. Undaunted by Raleigh's failures to perfect a permanent settlement, Wingfield and Newport and John Smith, with their bold comrades, set sail for the Chesapeake, and when the keels of the *Godspeed*, *Discovery* and *Susan Constant* touched the shores of Virginia, life in the New World for men of English blood had its initial day. Years of struggle with famine, disease and death; the cruelty of the savage and the hardships of the forest followed, but the colonists held firm to their resolve to win the land. At times the dark picture of Indian cruelty is relieved by the friendship of some native for these new-comers on the James. The story of Pocahontas is a fragrant reminder of such devotion.

There is something pathetic in the accounts which

---

the early chroniclers have left of the efforts of these colonists to keep alive the customs of old England, and to reproduce amid the untoward conditions of the new world the institutions and habits which sweetened life in the land across the sea. Thus we find them celebrating in an improvised sanctuary the sacred rites of their first Christmas-tide. With holly and running cedar they adorned their church of logs and canvas, and in the familiar liturgy of the mother-isle kept the ancient feast. Later they built for themselves homes along the waters of the James, the York and the Potomac, which in the names they bore, and a certain atmosphere of family pride and loyalty to ideals, faintly reproduced the manor-houses of old England.

For four decades the colony, composed of rather heterogeneous elements, continued its slow but ever-gaining battle for existence, until the triumph of Cromwell sent in swarms across the Atlantic the Cavaliers who sought in the new land an escape from the proscriptions, civil and religious, which followed his advent to power. This class of Englishmen had from the first been found among the colonists, but when the cause of the king went down in defeat they came in such numbers as to give to the new commonwealth its predominant in-

tellectual, social and religious characteristics. It was from this breed and the sturdy Scotch-Irish which later peopled the hills and valleys beyond the Blue Ridge, that sprung the line of great men whose achievements have lent such luster to the annals of Virginia.

The land to which they came was well worth the winning. It was a country of broad rivers, blue mountains, fertile valleys and majestic forests. No wonder that these new-comers, while jealous to keep alive filial thoughts of home, felt their hearts move with ever-increasing affection for this favored land. For ages it had lain as in primeval days. Their valor and endurance had won it from the savage and the wilds. Their genius for government and reverence for home had endowed it from the first with the blessings of law and social order. England thus in time became more and more a memory, while Virginia was to them the land of promise into which they had entered, and entered to stay.

In some such fashion was born and grew the Virginian's love for his native State—for the very face of the land, and the skies and stars which hang above it. The trials and triumphs of passing years, the achievements of her great sons, the desolations of war,

---

and the problems which so often disturb her peace, but added to the fervor of his affection; so that the time never came when he did not stand ready to devote life and fortune to maintain her cause, and in the moment of supreme surrender to declare, "*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*"

In the "Map of Virginia," as it is called, written by Captain John Smith, and published at Oxford in 1612, it is recorded that in June, 1608, Smith left Jamestown "to perform his discoverie," with a company composed of "six gentlemen" and "seven soldiers," the names of all which are given. Among the "gentlemen" of this expedition appears the name of "Thomas Momford." This party discovered the Potomac River, and returned to Jamestown on the 21st of July, 1608. On the 24th of July, 1608, Smith again sets out for a voyage of exploration along the shores of the Chesapeake, and again "Thomas Momford, Gentleman," is recorded as being of the party.

In Smith's "General Historie of Virginia," published in London in 1624, there appears at the end of the fifth chapter the announcement, "Written by Walter Russell, Anas Todkill and Thomas Mumford."

The foregoing is the first mention of the Momford or Munford name among Virginia folk.

During the next half century the number greatly increased, as is shown by the many land grants issued to men of that name. In 1680 James Mountford had become the owner of large tracts of land in Westover parish, Charles City County. In 1701 his eldest son, Robert, married Martha Kennon, daughter of Richard Kennon, of Conjuror's Neck, Henrico County. Despite the rather unpropitious name of the place from which Robert selected his bride, fortune seems to have favored him, and in due time we find him the proprietor of a large landed estate called "Haycocks," situated on the Appomattox River, near the site of the present city of Petersburg. In the minutes of the vestry of Bristol parish (old Blandford Church), we find him present at the meeting, October 30, 1720—the first of which any record remains—and three years afterward his son, James Mountford, was elected a member of the same body. In 1722 he represented the County of Prince George in the House of Burgesses. In 1733 we find him still enjoying life upon his estate at "Haycocks," because Colonel William Byrd, in his "Journey to the Land of Eden," records that he dined with Colo-

nel Mumford at his home, and adds: "An honest a man and a fairer trader, or a kinder friend, this country never produced: God send any of his sons may have the grace to take after him."

In 1735 Robert Munford died, leaving surviving three sons, James, Robert and Edward.

This second Robert was elected a vestryman of Bristol parish, to succeed his father, and like his father represented the County of Prince George in the House of Burgesses. He married Annie Bland, daughter of Richard Bland, of Jordan's Point, James River, and Elizabeth Randolph—the latter the youngest child of the celebrated William Randolph, of Turkey Island, James River. Annie Bland's sister, Mary Bland, married Henry Lee, of Lee's Hall, Potomac River; and her other sister, Elizabeth Bland, married William Beverley, of Blandville, Rappahannock River. Thus were united the Randolphs, Blands, Beverleys, Lees and Munfords.

The second son of this Robert Munford and Annie Bland Munford, was also named Robert, and he married his cousin Annie Beverley, the daughter of William Beverley and Elizabeth Bland Beverley just referred to. This Robert Munford lived in the County of Meck-

lenburg, and was a person of no little importance in his day and generation. While quite a young man he was a soldier in the French-Indian Wars. In the "Bland Papers" there are several letters from him to his uncle, Colonel Theodoric Bland, Sr., which give interesting details with respect to his experience as a soldier, and above all his estimate of his commanding officer, George Washington, who was then only about twenty-six years of age. In a letter under date of July 6, 1758, from Fort Cumberland, he writes:

"After being delayed at Winchester for five or six weeks longer than expected (in which time I was ordered express to Williamsburg, and allowed but a day after my return to prepare), we push'd off into the wide ocean. I was permitted to walk every step of the way to this humble fort, to eat little, and lay hard; over mountains, thro' mud and water, yet as merry and hearty as ever. Our flankers and sentries pretend they saw the enemy daily, but they never approached us. A detachment is this moment ordered off to clear a road thirty miles, and our companies to cover the working party. We are in fine scalping ground, I assure you. The guns pop about us, and you may see the fellows prick up their ears like deer every moment. Our Colonel is



---

an example of fortitude in either danger or hardships, and by his easy, polite behavior has gained not only the regard, but the affection of both officers and soldiers. He has kindly invited me to his table for the campaign, offered me any sum of money I may have occasion for, without charging either principal or interest, and signified his approbation of my conduct hitherto in such a manner as is to me of advantage."

Along with this letter comes a shorter one, to his aunt, Mrs. Bland, whom he addresses as "Hon'd Madam," concluding with the injunction, "My love to the lassies."

Later he was for years a representative in the House of Burgesses, and in the troublous times which just antedated the Revolution we find him with his kinsfolk, the Blands, Beverleys and Lees, bearing a brave part against the aggressions of his gracious sovereign, King George III. On the monument recently erected at Williamsburg to mark the site of the old House of Burgesses, his name is recorded as among the members who joined in the non-importation league, which was designed to change the policy of the British Ministry toward the colonists, by crippling the trade of the

two countries. In the war which followed he rose to the rank of Major, and in due time was gathered to his fathers, leaving behind him two daughters and a son. One of his daughters married Otway Byrd, son of Colonel William Byrd, of Westover; and the other, General Richard Kennon, a soldier of the Revolution. His son was William Munford, who happily escaped the dangers of the war by being born too late to bear a man's part, and who afterward gained no little fame as the translator of Homer's *Iliad*, and the author of the *Virginia Law Reports* which bear his name. He was a member of the Executive Council, and frequently represented Mecklenburg in the State Senate and House of Delegates. This William Munford was my grandfather, and possesses for our narrative at this time an additional interest, because more than a century ago he lived upon the spot which to-day for me and mine bears the name of home.

The records of the State Land Office of Virginia show that in the year 1675 Sir William Berkeley, then Governor of the colony, issued to William Byrd, Sr., letters patent for a tract of land at the Falls of James River. Upon this land his son William Byrd, Jr., subsequently laid out the City of Richmond, and thus

---

became its founder. Included in this boundary was the lot situated on the summit of what was then called by the Indians Shockoe Hill—a name which survives to this day—and which lot is now prosaically designated as No. 503 East Grace Street.

By a series of alienations which we need not pause to recount, this land in 1792 became the property of Chancellor George Wythe, and here stood the home of that distinguished jurist until the date of his death.

Of all these men, Berkeley, Byrd and Wythe, much of interest might be written, but reference here will only be made to them in so far as they touch this narrative.

Sir William Berkeley was for years the Governor of the colony. He ruled with a devotion to the cause of his king and the Established Church, which has served to keep alive his fame in the condemnations of those who contemned his policy. He it was who precipitated Bacon's Rebellion, by his persistent neglect to guard the colonists against the hostile Indians, and then with an iron hand encompassed the downfall of the uprising and the execution of its leaders. Among the latter was my kinsman Giles Bland, who for his indiscreet patriotism the stout old Royalist "hanged by his neck," as the

ancient formula ran. So by this pleasant circumstance, as well as the fact that his official act, as we have seen, first segregated what is now 503 East Grace Street from primeval wilds and dedicated it to the service of civilized man, the old Governor has a place in this narrative.

William Byrd, Jr., was notable as the owner of Westover, whose glories have not yet faded, and as a man of letters, refinement and varied achievements, many of which are recounted in Latin on the monument which still marks his grave in the garden at Westover. The sister of my grandfather William Munford married his son Otway Byrd, and thus because of family ties and former ownership of the land on which now stands our home, this courtly gentleman must be remembered. Nor should we in passing forget his daughter, the beautiful Evelyn Byrd, whose romantic life and untimely death have afforded so many American novelists themes for romance, and whose beauty may still be traced in the portrait which hangs on the walls at Lower Brandon.

George Wythe was one of that wonderful galaxy of men which arose in Virginia just prior to the Revolution. He was a member of the Continental Congress,

---

of the convention which framed the Federal Constitution, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and Professor of Law at William and Mary College, where he numbered Thomas Jefferson and John Marshall among his students. Later he became the Chancellor of Virginia, and in consequence of his election to this position removed from Williamsburg and took up his abode in Richmond at the time and place above indicated. But it is of him as professor of law when William Munford was a student, that we must first speak.

I have before me a copy of the "William and Mary College Historical Magazine," in which are published a number of letters from William Munford to his college friend John Coalter, afterward Judge of our Supreme Court. In one of these letters, under date of June 13, 1790, young Munford writes :

"My great resource is Mr. Wythe. If I were to live with him I should at the same time think a great point gained, and be highly pleased. Indeed, from some conversations we have had together I think it likely he will agree. If so, your friend's fortune is made. Nothing could advance me faster in the world than the reputation of having been educated

by Mr. Wythe, for such a man as he casts a light upon all around him."

These commendable aspirations of the young student were happily realized, and so he entered the household of Professor Wythe while at William and Mary, and upon the removal of the latter to Richmond he continued for several years a student of the law and a member of his family, in the house then situated, as we have seen, on the spot where now stands our home.

In Mordecai's delightful book, "*Richmond in Bygone Days*," there are many references to the old Chancellor, his home and his friends. After referring to the Du Val lot, which he says was the scene of Ralph Ringwood's adventure as told by Washington Irving, and that the celebrated William Wirt occupied the dwelling which formerly stood there, he proceeds:

"On the opposite square sits the unpretending abode of that learned, wise and excellent man George Wythe, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and whose life is interwoven with the history of Virginia, from his earliest manhood to his latest years.

"A fine tulip poplar (Miss Murray would say

---

*Liriodendron Tulipifera*) planted by Mr. Wythe, marks the corner where the house stood."

Mr. Mordecai then proceeds to record the fact that no less a person than Henry Clay was another inmate of the old Chancellor's home, and a recipient of his sympathy and assistance:

"Henry Clay when a youth wrote in the office of Peter Tinsley, clerk of the court in which Mr. Wythe presided, and his attention was no doubt attracted by young Clay's deportment. The judge invited him to his house, gave him advice and instruction, and it was from this source probably that Mr. Clay got the first insight of his profession. A letter from Mr. Clay to Mr. Minor dated May 3rd, 1851, and published in the 'Virginia Historical Register,' Vol. V, says: 'My first acquaintance with Mr. Wythe was in 1793, in my sixteenth year, when I was a clerk in his court, and he then probably threescore years and ten. His right hand was disabled by gout, or rheumatism, and I acted as his amanuensis, and wrote the cases he reported. It caused me a great deal of labor, not understanding a single Greek character, to write quotations from Greek authors which he inserted in copies of his reports to Mr. Adams, Thomas Jefferson and one

or two others. I wrote them by copying each character from a book. Mr. Wythe was one of the purest, best and learned of men in classical lore that I ever knew.' ”

From an article prepared by the late Dr. William P. Palmer, who was an antiquarian of no mean attainments, I take the following extract, in which allusion is made to the above-mentioned tree planted by the old Chancellor, and how he was wont to gather his friends under its shade. Says Dr. Palmer:

“ From the best authority it is known that the great Chancellor held it in high favor. When it was young he cherished and nurtured it. Under its shade he and his friends spent many hours in the enjoyment of the society so congenial to each other, indulging in the literary taste for which they and he were so fitted. It is said that the learned coterie of which he was the distinguished center, might often be seen reading the ancient classics in the original, and discussing the theme suggested by both Greek and Latin authors. Among these welcome guests were the two Parsons Blair and Buchanan; the Munfords; Randolphs and Major Du Val, his devoted neighbor across the street, and the three noted medical men of the day, Doctors McClung, McCaw and Foushee.”



---

Upon the conclusion of young Munford's studies as a law student, he left the hospitable house of his friend and benefactor and returned to his home in Mecklenburg, from which county, as we have seen, he subsequently returned to Richmond, and took up his abode on the corner of Fifth and Canal streets. Young Munford subsequently showed his appreciation of the Chancellor's friendship by bestowing upon his oldest son the name "George Wythe." Later he performed the sad duty of pronouncing the oration on the occasion of the funeral of the Chancellor, which took place from the Capitol.

But the venerable Chancellor, learned and benignant, lies in the churchyard under the spire of old St. John's, his young friend Munford is established in his own home, busy with his law-books and his Homer, while the new protégé, Henry Clay, is laying the foundations of a great fame in the then frontier commonwealth of Kentucky. The old dwelling where with unostentatious hospitality the Chancellor had been wont to gather his neighbors, has been torn down and on its site is rising a mansion which remains to this day unchanged in its graceful lines and harmonious proportions. Abraham Warwick, head of an ancient family, is the new owner,

and the house is the marriage settlement upon his intended bride, Miss Chevellic, the beauty and heiress of the city. I have before me the deed of marriage settlement, in which Warwick dedicates the house to the sacred service of wife and children.

Long years of prosperous fortune follow this auspicious beginning. The fame of the house, the grace of its hostess, and the elegance of its appointments, spread beyond the borders of the State, and for years it was a center of refinement and good cheer. Here I will again quote from the article above referred to, written by Dr. Palmer, descriptive of the old house:

“Mr. Warwick spared no pains or money in its construction. The bricks were brought from Baltimore; its outside decorations were of white marble, and its classic entrance was made chiefly of the same material. The timbers were the best in the country and were selected by his special agent, who is now living, one of the oldest and best known citizens of Richmond. Although more than sixty years have passed since it was erected, and though its grounds were contracted by recent so-called improvements, it is still a striking feature of the city. The spot which it adorns was long known as the highest point in Richmond. Its elevated situation,

---

graceful proportions and finish, would suggest to any stranger or observer that it was planned by a man of taste, and must be the home of a gentleman."

Time, however, worked its inevitable changes, while the Civil War added its desolating touch to lives and fortunes. After fifty years of the Warwicks, father and son, came the Lees, Mr. and Mrs. George Lee, gentle people who kept alive in a quiet way the best traditions of the house. Later the Pages—Major Legh R. Page became the owner. This gentleman was one of the most distinguished members of the Richmond Bar. At his hospitable board he was accustomed to gather the prominent judges and lawyers of his day. Richmond is in the circuit over whose Federal Court the Chief Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States are accustomed to preside. This circumstance brings to the city quite frequently the incumbents of that high office. Scarcely a visit, therefore, was made to Richmond by the late Chief Justice Waite, or his successor Chief Justice Fuller, during the lifetime of Major Page, which did not find them his guests along with a goodly company of men only less distinguished. Thus the place took on again some of the characteristics

which marked the days of Chancellor Wythe and his associates.

These recitals bring us down to the time of the present ownership, but how the house became for me a home is, in the words of Mr. Kipling, "another story."

It was many years ago that I saw for the first time the young woman, the magic of whose presence was to work this change. The occasion was a social function at the home of a mutual friend. The goodly company of accomplished men and women in evening toilets, the music, lights and flowers, combined to make the event all that the most ambitious hostess could have desired. Among the guests was a young girl who, it was evident, had not yet made her formal *début* in the social realm. With reluctant footsteps she seemed to stand upon its borders and regard with rather unapproving eyes the prospect beyond. There was about her an air of mingled diffidence and audacity. A lithe figure, earnest brown eyes, clean-cut features,—these were the salient points in the picture. This much I took in at a glance, and with it came the startled thought that no more should I stand alone upon the threshold of my individual life—to paraphrase the lines of Mrs. Browning.

The impression thus formed was deepened when a year or more later I was formally presented.

I need not recount the story—old as Creation, yet as fresh as the dawn. It was, however, no instance of *veni, vidi, vici*. Years followed in which the hope of success alternated with the fear of failure. The wooing and the winning of a woman's heart! What analyst of fancy—what magician of fortune can portray the how and the why? Favoring stars, however, ruled my horoscope, and at length in their courses the long-hoped-for event was declared.

Perhaps it may be well to record here some of the experiences of those years in so far as they bear upon the social customs of the times. The occasion of my formal presentation was a New Year's Day reception, and the opportunity thus afforded sprung from the custom then universal in Richmond of dedicating that day to making and receiving calls. From the early hours of the forenoon until late at night groups of men might be seen going from house to house. With more or less preparation, the hostesses in these several homes—with groups of young women assisting—stood ready to welcome the tide of inflowing callers. Collations were spread to add good cheer to the friendly salutations of

the day. It was a time to revive old friendships and to form new ones ; to make good resolves, and amid the hopeful atmosphere everywhere prevailing picture bright forecasts of the new year which lay beyond. Neighbors caught afresh some of the mystical fellowship which comes with the breaking of bread, the pledge of loyalty and all the gentle amenities which flower within the sacred precincts of the home. It was a day of days for the *débutantes* whose fresh young faces greeted you with infectious enthusiasm and lent to the scene some of the lyric charm of which youth is the fortunate possessor. Of all this and so much more the day stood for, and with genuine regret we have to record that the genial custom no longer finds a place among the habits of our times.

Newspapers usually announced the homes where callers would be welcomed, with the names of those who would receive. Thus it was that I scanned with particular interest the papers on the day in question, if haply I might find where the lady who had caught my errant fancy would hold her court. I recall with amusement the comments of a favorite aunt—a lady of the old régime—upon the names of those announced to receive. Some were fair and some were homely, but worst

---

of all some could not boast a family tree, and the glory of their new-made riches seemed to bar rather than admit them to the charmed circle of society. High encomiums, however, were accorded the coterie of young women among whom our lady had a place. "I have watched her," said my aunt, "for many years. She was a scholar at my son-in-law's school. She is as lovely in mind as she is in person, and is a sensible girl—not crazy about men." Not crazy about men! In the years which followed there seemed a grim irony in the fact that she had been commended to my favor because of her little concern for men.

The White Sulphur Springs—"The Old White," as we loved to call it—was an institution which held a unique place in the affections of our people. It presented a curious blending of democratic simplicity and social exclusiveness. There were no private cottages; all the guests inhabited the little one-story buildings which nestled under the ancient oaks at the base of the hills, or took their chance of comfort in the great hotel which stood in the center of the lawn. All ate in one immense dining-room, gathered in the same parlor and danced in the same hall. With guests numbering over a thousand, these primitive conditions required a strict

censorship on the part of those who stood sponsors for the social proprieties of the old place. Ancient dames who had been wooed and won under those selfsame oaks where now their grandchildren played, gave the word which fixed the social status of each new-comer. Those from Virginia, Baltimore, Savannah, Charleston, Mobile and New Orleans enjoyed a certain immunity from investigation, because their places had long ago been determined. It was a very tolerant censorship, however, and the possessor of good manners and a respectable wardrobe could count upon reasonable treatment at the hands of those who held social sway in that little world.

There was a strange mixture of motives which brought this numerous company to the Springs. Some drank the water, some rode or drove, some played poker, some talked politics, some played whist, some danced the German, but the great majority of those who each year sought its precincts were impelled by the social instinct. The Old White was the social center where gathered the best society of Virginia and the South. Men and women met there from sheer love of seeing each other. Attractive people—attractive because of wit, grace, beauty, heroism or the like—were accorded a certain



precedence. The loveliest woman—generally a young girl beautiful in person and gracious in mien—was in the parlance of the hour “The Belle of the White,” as she was the Queen of Hearts—old and young. It was a time and place for love-making, and the number of those who reckon the romance of their lives to have here received its first impulse can never be known until the records in Cupid’s keeping are unrolled. I can recall many pleasant pictures of the old place, but the most vivid impression is that of its social life in which moved courtly men and gracious women, with here and there a face and form which the flight of years has only served to render more winsome.

Another social custom was that of house-parties. Hospitality is an ancient and much-esteemed virtue in Virginia. A cordial welcome awaits you in the homes of her people—especially in the old country-houses where the usages and traditions of the past have not been broken by the spirit and habits of more modern days. But house-parties were instances of hospitality where the guests were selected with a special reference to their congeniality, and thus possessed an esoteric charm all their own. Given an ancient homestead, far from the city’s din, with the abounding life of the

springtime or the glories of autumn crowning all the countryside; a company of young men and women congenial in taste and temperament, and you have all the essentials of a fortnight as replete with joys as it is given for mortals to know.

Algoma is a dear sweet home overlooking the waters of the upper James. Here it was my good fortune to be one of many such parties which the kindly heart and unfailing hospitality of the hostess welcomed to its halls. We need not pause to recount the various forms of merrymaking which there prevailed. Life in the open air, horses and hounds, gun and rod, fields of daisies, forests in all their solemn charm, summer evenings under the flood of moonlight or winter nights around fires of blazing cones,—these were incidents which added zest to the joys of hospitality. A glance at the list of guests would reveal to the initiated the fact that their personnel had been determined by considerations other than the mere *bonne camaraderie* of casual acquaintanceship. Almost every matron in old Virginia is a match-maker, and the sweet woman who presided over Algoma seemed always to have several such affairs on her mind and heart. I recall with amused interest how she exercised her prerogatives as

---

hostess to arrange that the proper parties should be left together at opportune times, and to remind my would-be rivals that she could not permit the young lady whose colors I hoped to wear to be the object of their serious attentions. Many happy homes now attest the success of our hostess in this difficult rôle, and these lines might never have been written but for those house-parties at Algoma and her kindly interest in my fortunes.

Thus it was, and after all the happenings of the wedding and the bridal tour we at length found ourselves seated by the quiet fireside of a new home. No. 10 North Laurel Street looks out upon the fresh green sward and graceful trees of Monroe Park, and because of the beauty without and peace within we named the home Clear Comfort. I shall always regard it with feelings of the warmest interest and affection. Here we came at the dawn of our married life, and here in the golden days which followed our children were born.

But now the old house on Shockoe Hill could become for me a home, and hither we brought our Household Gods. About its hearthstone was now felt the gracious presence of wife and mother, while the sweetest music of all its past was reëchoed in the prattle of little voices

and patter of little feet. The old mansion with its air of quiet dignity quickens the gentle courtesies of life and deepens the reverence for home. As the worshipers in some venerable cathedral feel the mystical union between all those, past and present, who claim a part in its mysteries, so this ancient dwelling links the present with the charm of bygone days, and inspires with gentler ideals all those who cross its threshold.

But now our narrative must end. Neither memories of the past nor fancies of the future can further woo my pen. Here I am content to rest. Mind and heart greet with gratitude the hour, while every scene and incident about me proclaims the lyric name of home.













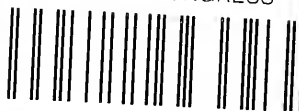


APR. 71



N. MANCHESTER,  
INDIANA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 441 377 5